











# GERMANS BEYOND GERMANY

AN ANTHOLOGY

Edited, with Biographical Notes, and an Introduction.

BY

VILHELM HAAS

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ALL TRANSLATIONS EXCEPT WHERE OTHERWISE  
INDICATED, ARE BY  
HETTY KOHN



IN MEMORIAM  
T. G. MASARYK

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## PREFACE

*First of all the dedication needs an explanation. The sociological and psychological criticism of literature and philosophy contained in some of the works of T. G. Masaryk, have ever been the foundation of my own, and if there is anything I regret, it is that it is not granted to me to submit this book to the revered man. The dedication is thus not only to the founder of my Czechoslovakian motherland; but to the great teacher and scholar.*

*The present book has no political or propagandist aspirations whatsoever. The analysis of the German mind laid down in the Introduction was made *sine ira et studio*.— Moreover, the author can assure the reader that his criticism of the German bourgeois mind in 1918 or 1930 was no different from after 1939. His only error was to over-estimate to some extent until 1933 the political forces which from the right (Church, nobility) and from the left (the workers) might have been able to resist the inroads of Nazism. For even though, as is set forth in the Introduction, a certain idea which then led to Nazism, is innate in the German soul and is demonstrable in the whole of German literature, the realisation of that idea might nevertheless have turned out differently, had it not originated precisely with the most*

*brutal, morally most disintegrated stratum of the German people, the German petite bourgeoisie.*

*Above all, I wish to thank Miss Hetty Kohn for her untiring work with the often difficult translations. The verse translations of the two poems by Heine are also by Miss Kohn. My thanks are further due to those whose kindness facilitated my obtaining the books, many of which were difficult to procure, especially Madame Sophia Wadia and the Honorary Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay Branch, Mr. J. S. Tilley, as well as all those Czechoslovakian and Jewish gentlemen who placed their books brought with them from Europe, at my disposal:*

*V. H.*

*Bombay, April 1941.*

## INTRODUCTION

When we speak to educated people about German National Socialism, we generally encounter two opinions. The one is that the German people has been overwhelmed by a gang of criminals, and need only be freed from them in order to re-enter the ranks of civilised nations. This view is doubtless, from every standpoint of history and philosophy, absurd, and would be rejected by almost every German too. And so only the other opinion can be right, namely that a phenomenon like Hitler cannot be pure chance but must have some relation to the German character.

Even this, however, does not explain much, and it is impossible to offer any explanation at all as long as we regard National Socialism as a special problem or puzzle, and not as what it actually is : a living phase of the German people which was ever there in nuce, which has never at any moment of the history of the German people ceased to exist, and which has but found expression in a particularly pure form in the sphere of politics today. Formerly we often heard the view that the German people

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is a people of dreamers, and this is true in the one sense if we wish to call a people a dreamer which always dreams only the one dream, and dreams that one dream again and again in alternating variations and forms, here as a piece of music, there as a poem, as a philosophical system or a political idea; like a sculptor who wishes to realise his vision, and proceeds to model all manner of fragments in the unmoulded clay, a piece of the face, the gesture of a hand, the roundness of a shoulder, the torso—until his dream has become plastic reality; and this reality, this realisation of a secular dream, often indistinct, often half unconscious, experienced in one form or another as music, poetry or philosophy—that total realisation of it into whose Medusa-like countenance we gaze today amazed and stiff with horror, is “National Socialism”, or, if we prefer, National Socialism is everything, it is the German Romanticism of the beginning of the 19th century, Frederick the Great, Bismarck, German philosophy, Martin Luther, the Prussian General Staff, Richard Wagner and an antique ode by Hölderlin.

One single vision gleams like a ghostly moon through the German centuries, one single stream rushes beneath German earth. The German is like a man with bandaged eyes, groping for this goal and that, and ever

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letting it slip again because it is not yet the right goal, the ultimate goal, until he has found this ultimate goal—the name of this ultimate goal is unfortunately not Goethe or Luther, not Beethoven or Kant, its name is Hitler ; whereat the world can only be astonished in as far as it does not really know the German people and German literature, and has glossed over all sinister episodes of the history of the German mind for centuries with the cheap consolation that things are probably not really so bad and that the German people is probably not much different from every other people—and it is precisely this which is untrue. The German people is different from other peoples, it is sinister, and the Germans themselves have never seriously maintained that they are kindly people with whom at a pinch we could get along well. Indeed, through the mouths of their intellectual representatives they have always honestly maintained the contrary. Neither have they ever wanted it, in their inmost souls they always wanted it otherwise, at the bottom of their hearts they were proud of being fear-inspiring spectres, before which the world should one day grow stiff with horror.

The German people loves to search for a dark secret behind every other nation, a world-conspiracy, a hellish might which seeks to disintegrate and dissolve the world-

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order so as to inaugurate some mystical world-dominion of the devil. In about 1770, when Goethe was young, the French were this incarnation of the devil, round about 1914 it was the English, round about 1930 the Russians, since 1933 the Jews, but it is only the urge in their own breasts which they seek—and find—in other nations, from a kind of fear of themselves and of what they would be capable of doing, were they to give rein to that urge. Bismarck once declared that the Germans feared God and nought else on earth, and that is perhaps true, with a single exception, however: they fear themselves too. The whole of great real German poetry is composed of this mixture: the delirium of world-dissolution—and the fear of that delirium. All Hitler has done is simply to release this urge, he has, as it were, provided it with a good conscience. We do not in the least wish to maintain here that this persecution-mania which sees "the devil" now here, now there, was not sometimes honest, when they themselves were not fully conscious of this demon in their own breasts. Since the Franco-German War of 1870-71, however, and since Nietzsche, it has been more or less only a political trick.

For since 1870 the Germans have known their own secret pretty well. Since the Franco-German War the Germans have become a political and practical people,

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which they had not been before, and they have been going in for "Weltpolitik." It is doing this secret a great injustice, however, simply to call it "imperialistic." It has nothing to do with the imperialism of Ancient Rome or with the imperialism of Louis XIV. It is but a chance that in this present age of imperialism it has assumed the forms of imperialism. It is a kind of gigantic primeval forest vision, a chaos of hot, unfettered instincts for which everything in the world is too clear, too cold, too well defined, too real. The goal of this secret urge is not any concrete something, but a nothingness, a total dissolution, a twilight of the worlds: and that is why it exerts so hypnotic and attractive an influence over many millions of people even outside Germany, for nothingness has an impenetrable charm, and death smiles just as seductively at many people as does life at many others.

Indeed, there is something in the soul of every human being, which loves death and feels attracted towards death, simply because human beings are a part of Nature, in which everything must die in order to be reborn, and in which dissolution at the same time means rebirth. No people has, like the German people, mingled this dark feeling of nature with the rational every-day world, with politics, technology, law, business, and pressed everything into the service of destruction

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and resurrection. But no people was less capable than the German, of imparting a concrete form to this idea of "resurrection." With all the really great things it has achieved, from philosophy and theology to technology—it has almost only increased the negative forces of the cosmos, outlawry, amorality and chaos; the wonderful organising talent of the Germans is nothing but the cloak concealing this chaos, the thin shell without which all within the German individual and the German people as a whole would immediately collapse. The phoenix in the ancient myth burns itself in order to rise rejuvenated and new. But even the suicide would not do the deed if in the depth of his soul there did not glimmer a tiny spark of hope in a resurrection, a "better world." In the history of the world the German people always wanted to play the part of the phoenix—but there was always something of the suicide in the soul of this people—the suicide and the man who runs amuck.

Prior to 1933 it was possible to live in Germany among Germans for decades without perceiving anything of this secret—but suddenly it would look at us with its stony Medusa eyes, on the page of a book, in some turn of a phrase used by a German friend, in some motif of an opera by Richard Wagner—and all at once the whole history of Germany would appear to us in an

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entirely new light. And here we must say something to which further reference will be made later on : this secret could remain a secret only because almost the whole of German literature is inaccessible to the foreigner—by this I do not mean the official German literature, a little Goethe, a little Schiller, Heine or Nietzsche, as known abroad, but the real German literature, in which the German dreamer voluptuously lives his dark, limitless dreams, Görres or Baader, or Kleist's dramas or those of the “Storm and Stress,” or the political philosophy of Adam Müller, or E. Th. A. Hoffmann, or Grabbe, or Zacharias Werner, which have scarcely ever been translated and which indeed are, in part, quite untranslatable. The foreigner, perhaps knows Wagner's “Götterdämmerung” or “Tristan and Isolde;” but he cannot know that this apparently “new” music of the dissolution of the world into the nothingness of blind instincts, in the voluptuousness of death, is in reality at least two centuries old and has permeated German poetry, German philosophy; and indirectly even German politics, at all really decisive moments, just as it dominates the politics of the Germans today.

Here I should like to name two German poets as examples, whom, beside Hölderlin, I may with a clear

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conscience call the *greatest German poets* of all time ( for Goethe was far more than a mere poet ) : Heinrich von Kleist and Novalis, who both lived at the beginning of the 19th century. It really seems that no foreigner has ever yet really read Kleist's dramas "Die Hermannsschlacht" or "Penthesileia," or Kleist's poems, or the fragments by "Novalis" (pseudonym of Friedrich von Hardenberg), although these are certainly among the most important works of the history of the German mind. If we live in Germany and consequently come into somewhat closer contact with German literature, then one day by mere chance and in all innocence we read one of these old classics, and our hearts stand still with horror at these absolutely insane visions of "slaughter and murder in Kleist's works, where the world seems to drown in blood—at that sensual, physical and entirely sexual longing for death, almost a kind of death-pornography, which is to be found in the uncannily profound "Fragments" of the romanticist Novalis. Georges Clemenceau, who knew the German people well, said shortly before his death: "The German people loves death—one cannot live with such a people." The same was said by the German Heinrich Heine, and on a hundred pages of the works of Novalis this death-sexuality is to be found, and its refined tubercular flesh and

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blood stench is almost unbearable—and also on a hundred pages of Wagner's music. But the same is to be found in Kleist's works, and the German soul really lives in Kleist's works. Let us take, for instance, his drama "Die Hermannsschlacht." The notable thing is not that this drama glorifies a hero, Hermann the Cheruscan, who liberated the Germans from a foreign yoke, the yoke of the Romans. Such heroes are to be found in every nation, Jeanne d'Arc, for instance, is a heroine of this kind too. The characteristic feature about Kleist is the sensuous delight with which he glorifies deception and treachery, almost more than the liberation of the Germans in itself, the indescribable sadistic lewdness with which a German woman here looks on at her Roman lover being slowly torn to pieces by a bear in a bear-pit, and mocks at the dying man, the pride with which Hermann boasts that he has cast off all morality and honour, all acquired culture and education and has become a barbarian once more. What Kleist sang round about 1800 we heard again and again exactly, in 1933 : "We Germans are too civilised, we must become barbarians again"—we heard it a hundred times from German leaders, great and small, in those days, and a dozen of our so-called German "friends" repeated it expressly again and again to our very faces, to our nameless

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horror, individuals whom a few months earlier we would still have considered human beings with human feelings. There is a poem by Kleist, "Germania to her Children,"<sup>1</sup> in which the mother Germania exhorts her children to dye all the fields, all the meadows in Germany white with the bones of the slaughtered French; what the vulture and the fox refuse to eat, is to be thrown as food to the fishes; the river Rhine is to be dammed off by the heap of bones in such a way that it shall flow around the Palatinate, thus forming the new frontier between Germany and France—a trifling geographical alteration which could scarcely be carried out even by slaughtering all living Frenchmen together with the women and children. Surely there is not in the entire literature of the world a second vision of mass slaughter to compare with this. No mere national pride explains these insane orgies of slaughter with their smell of blood and carrion. The end of this totally incredible poem is :

"A pleasure-hunt, as when marksmen sit on the tracks of the wolf ! Strike him dead ! World-justice will not ask you for the reasons ! "

<sup>1</sup> Against the France of Napoleon, but written in the midst of peace.

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This is what a mother, a real German mother, has to say to her children.<sup>2</sup>

An endless carnage of this kind, which leaves the reader completely nonplussed, is also to be found at the conclusion of the old German national epic, the "Nibelungenlied", and in the famous dramatisation of this epic by Friedrich Hebbel, when the German Kriemhilde has her entire male relatives, the whole family, butchered by the Huns in a carnage lasting several days, so that even the barbarian Attila, the dread king of the Huns, turns away in horror; and here too, it is striking how deception and treachery dominate the whole action, as in the "Hermannsschlacht": the two most sacred

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<sup>2</sup> Of course this is not a question of the pints of blood which are to be compared, for in that case many an Elizabethan drama and also many passages from the Indian epics would beat German literature—it is rather a particular psychological attitude towards bloodshed and death, which is to be found only in German poetry, and even, as we have seen, in German poetry, of the 19th century. It is really a pity that Kleist's "Hermannsschlacht" has never been translated into a foreign language. It is indeed the most perfect self-portrait of the German people. Insane hate and bloodthirstiness disfigure a people otherwise proud and lofty, to such an extent that in this "drama of Liberation" the Germans are on a far lower moral level than their Roman (i. e. French) enemies. And another thing: we see here in the most startling manner the remarkable form of this German hate, which transfers to the "arch-enemy" all that exactly of which one is capable oneself, that which one is—the policy of the "oppressor" Varus in this drama is literally, line for line, word for word, the very accurate reflection of Hitler's European policy of 1939-41.

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oaths of all ancient peoples, sacred indissoluble friendship, and hospitality, are broken here—Siegfried is killed from behind by Hagen, who had sealed his lifelong friendship with him by mingling their blood in a goblet of wine and drinking it together—a symbolical act. By way of revenge Kriemhilde has her family, whom she had invited as her guests, murdered at the banquet down to the last man.

It is to be hoped that the reader will not misunderstand these utterances, thinking that the Germans are here portrayed simply as a nation of criminals. That is not what I mean to say ; but: German greatness, which is a real greatness, is inseparably bound up with German insanity, which is a real insanity. It is the German mind which is “dangerous”—and this has indeed been confessed again and again with pride by German authors themselves. There is a very high incarnation of this German genius, and that is German poetry and German philosophy. And there is a very low one, that is German Politics. Sure it is that there are few books in world-literature as suggestive, as mysteriously interesting, as strangely attractive as, shall we say, the works of Kleist, the Fragments by Novalis, the political essays of Görres, the philosophy of Schopenhauer or Nietzsche, the poems of Stefan George. On the other hand, the political

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history of probably not a single people is as full of brutality and cynicism as the politics of German princes and statesmen. It is true that the history of no people in the world is free from cruelty. In the German people, however, the gulf between mind and politics sometimes appeared greater than in any other people. While such talented authors and poets as Kant, Lessing, Schiller, Goethe lived in Germany, German political life was still on the level of the contemporary wild tribes of Central Africa, for German princes of the 18th century sold their subjects one by one as slaves, just as the African chiefs of the same period did, to fight in America, and special damages were even paid to the sellers for maimed and slaughtered subjects. And this went on at the same period at which Goethe was working at "Faust". It has often been a consoling thought that German political life had remained far behind German intellectual life, and no doubt that is true in a superficial sense; but today when the former has caught the latter up, and both are marching together hand in hand in brotherly fashion to slaughter the world, the world ought to be ripe for the second further-reaching knowledge: that both German politics and German mind, in a deeper and more accurate sense, are, and always were, identical, because they have both sprung from exactly the same intellectual root. The

sale of German subjects as slaves by German princes not much more than 150 years back, is just as much a fact of German intellectual history as, say, the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, for both spring from the same intellectual root, the theology of Martin Luther; on the other hand, the gigantic amoralism of Goethe's "Faust" whose final and highest wisdom is again only might, force and organisation, is not directly in contradiction to National Socialism and Hitler—although Goethe personally would certainly be in some contradiction to Hitler, were he alive today, which fact, however, as a cautious man, he would presumably communicate only to his most intimate friends in strict confidence.

Thus in certain respects German Nazism is perfectly right in regarding itself as the real goal, the crowning glory and incarnation of the German mind, not only of German politics. It can, if it likes, claim for itself a glorious intellectual tradition going back at least to Martin Luther. The political theologian Martin Luther is quite definitely an ancestor of Hitler, for instance when he exhorts the German princes and temporal authorities not to let the sword of justice rust in their hands, "Your sword must be bloody!" he cries to those in power, for man is by nature evil and can only be ruled by blood and iron; and he personally, Luther, was the originator of

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that frightful massacre of German peasants unique in world-history.—Just as well can National Socialism claim for itself the intellectual tendencies of the beginning and middle of the 18th century, the “Storm and Stress,” (in which Goethe grew up,) with its mad Francophobia and its worship of the released instincts. Furthermore Goebbels is fully justified in pointing to the German romantic philosophy at the beginning of the 19th century which indeed already created the idea of the “totalitarian” State, the “total” mobilisation and the “totalitarian” war as propagated today by Fascism and Nazism: for the romantic political philosopher Adam Müller, the State was nothing but an eternal war machine, with short peaceful interludes to prepare for the “next war”, and science, literature and art are for Adam Müller ‘nothing but war weapons of a special kind, means for a “total mobilisation”; as early as in about 1810 he already laughs to scorn the utopia of free science, free art and the rights of man, an expression conveying nothing to him, for, according to him there is no “human being”, he, Adam Müller, maintained he had never seen a “human being” in his life, de facto there were only citizens and subjects, and all that these do and think takes place within the State and must be subservient to the life-purpose of the State, i.e. the totalitarian war.

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Something of the same sort applies to the contemporary philosophy of Joh. Gottl. Fichte, who is one of the most undoubted spiritual teachers of National Socialism : in his "Speeches to the German Nation" ("Reden an die deutsche Nation") we already find that mad arrogance of German nationalism which simply calls all that is lofty, noble and proud in the human soul, in one word "German", wherein Fichte, it is true, condescendingly admits that even a Frenchman or an Englishman can be "a German"; and in his little book "The closed Economic State" ("Der geschlossene Handelsstaat") he already sketches the outlines of an autarkic state, just as they were subsequently realised on a gigantic scale by National Socialism; his little work about "Machiavelli" which seems like a kind of philosophical analogy of Kleist's "Hermannsschlacht" which was written about the same time, is also of immense importance.

If we go but a short step further in the history of the German mind, say between 1820 and 1850, German philosophy of nature, with its blind, drunken worship of blood, earth and instinct and its scorn of sound common sense, is certainly one of the intellectual sources of Nazism, and the fact that Hegel's philosophy leads immediately to the Fascist view of life is a doctrine which has been officially taught a thousand times from every

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Italian professor's chair. The Hegelian political philosophy (much simplified) is a kind of philosophy of historical cynicism: He who conquers is historically always in the right. Thus survival in the struggle for historical existence is the only moral reality in history; history is its own judge; there is no moral judge above this judge, it is the highest authority in making its decisions; and the great man is simply the "man of his time", who "gives the time what it demands," and thus is right in the end. Thus here, too, Goebbels can find his intellectual ancestor; and it is equally true that Schopenhauer's violent attacks on the "Judaeo-Christian" Church and against Judaism have caused many a chord of the National-Socialist soul to vibrate in sympathy, and that the entire ideology of National Socialism down to the dot on the last "i" could be pieced together like a mosaic by the philosophy of Nietzsche. And, to come down to our own time, the greatest and most famous German poet of our time, Stefan George, has developed in his poetical works a view of life which is closely akin to National Socialism and is rightly cited by the latter again and again.—We have only to think, for instance, of that particular poem in which George warns the fair-skinned German youths against defiling themselves by contact with "dark women." In short, there is scarcely a decade in the

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history of the German mind since at least 1800, in which Herr Goebbels could not find a great German poet or thinker whom he could describe as a forerunner of National Socialism.

That is the one side of the medal. But now let us look at the reverse side. The same Stefan George who, quite rightly, is quoted by the Nazis as an intellectual ancestor of Nazism, considered the German people (as is shown in a poem in the book "Der siebente Ring"—"The Seventh Ring") as the most despicable in the world, more despicable than a Roman prostitute boy who waits for customers at the gate of a Roman fortress in the Rhineland by night. The same Stefan George left Germany in 1933 immediately after Hitler came into power; soon afterwards he died as a refugee in Italian Switzerland and did not even consent to his corpse being buried in German soil, though he would have been sure of a pompous State funeral under the auspices of Goebbels.—Nietzsche, whose philosophical works could, in part, indeed be taught and learned as the catechism of National Socialism, can nevertheless be utilised as a prophet of Hitler only by applying the entire literary and editorial knavery of present-day literary Germany (which, it is true, would not be difficult for that scribbling riff-raff): for Nietzsche too, hated and despised the

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German people, in the end he despised it so terribly that we often think he no longer really regarded the German as a human being at all; and nothing appeared to him more idiotic than German anti-Semitism which was then just rising. All these innumerable passages must now, of course, be omitted in popular editions of Nietzsche's works and letters, in order to make them possible in Nazi Germany.

The unspeakable contempt of Nietzsche for the German people is shared in full measure by Schopenhauer, who would otherwise be so wonderful an instrument in the fight of Nazism against the Judaeo-Christian Church and for a new "Aryan original religion." Hölderlin, perhaps the greatest and purest German poet of all, likewise the prototype of an inspired singer, like Homer or Pindar, the mildest character that German soil ever produced, spat his contempt of the German people into its very face, in his novel "Hyperion"; and Goethe, generally so cautious, did the same thing a dozen times in conversation with friends on every possible occasion. Surely no people in the world has been so deeply and unspeakably despised by its greatest men as the German people.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> We have here spoken only of the great poetical and philosophical minds of Germany; but it should at least be mentioned that this contempt for the Germans was shared in full measure by their most prominent strategist and statesman, Frederick the Great.

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A careful distinction must be made here. A part of Victorian literature, too, for instance, was very critical of Victorian society, and the same may be said of French literature of the Bourgeois monarchy, of the "Juste milieu" of Louis-Philippe, and of the Second French Empire. Neither can anyone assert that, for instance, Bernard Shaw has handled the British people with kid gloves. But all this is quite a different thing: it is never a complete negation of the British people as a people, whilst even the restrained criticism of a Goethe practically amounts to the complete political negation of the German nation, which he wishes to see absolutely destroyed politically as a nation, to say nothing of the paroxysms of hatred of a Nietzsche or a Schopenhauer, who simply indignantly declined to be called members of this nation--Nietzsche went to the length of constructing for himself a dubious Polish genealogy, because he felt it a disgrace to be called a German. That is the difference between Germany and other countries.

It is possible that, for instance, the phenomenon of a Louis XIV and the society of Louis XIV's time did not come up to the ideals of a Corneille or a Racine, but Louis XIV and his mode of life and that of his society were surely in part a product of Corneille or Racine, just as Corneille and Racine are, in part, a product of Louis

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XIV, his mode of life and of the society of his epoch. We can speak of "French society in the age of Voltaire" or of "Spanish society in the age of Lope de Vega and Calderon", and in this case the identity between literary style and mode of life will be a very far-reaching one. Even so unreal a movement in art as that of the English fin-de-siècle was not entirely without influence on the concrete society of England and not uninfluenced by it—English ladies in the style of Rosetti or Burne-Jones could be met everywhere in Italian cities round about 1890, their volumes of Ruskin in their hands, many thought them ridiculous, others fascinating, but there they were, and even in 1938 when I was last in Florence, it struck me how Botticelli's paintings in the Uffizi Galleries were surrounded by dozens of English girls who all looked somewhat like sketches by Burne-Jones "after the style of Botticelli".

On the other hand it would be absurd to speak about a "German society in the age of Nietzsche", and if histories of German culture speak in boasting terms of "German society at the time of Goethe", then this means perhaps three or four literary salons in Berlin (mostly the salons of Jewish ladies) and two salons in Jena or Weimar, and that is all: Goethe himself was neither known nor really appreciated or indeed loved by

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the German people, and the same applies to Novalis, Hölderlin, Kleist and Nietzsche. Goethe died world-famous, but in Germany itself he was an absolutely isolated and embittered man, insulted by the German nationalists of his time; Novalis died very young of an incurable disease, wholly unknown, Kleist as a young man, half-insane, committed suicide because the German people allowed him to go to utter ruin and took not the slightest notice of him, Hölderlin and Nietzsche became hopelessly insane: that is, briefly, the biography of the five most prominent figures in German literature. A Dante could curse his native city of Florence as a venal harlot, but he knew the reasons for his banishment: they were political reasons, tragic concomitants of an age of civil wars. But these German men were not politically compromised, they were simply unknown, the German people left them lying by the wayside, they were banished and outlawed in their own country.

And yet all of them in some way embodied that ancient dream of the German people, of which at that time the German people were as yet scarcely conscious. When the German people grew mighty and cultured and political, then it also became clearly conscious of that dream and realised it—and the name of that realisation is Hitler; that is what the German people understood of

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Goethe, Hölderlin, Kleist, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and, Stefan George ; and it may safely be said that in this the German people has come fully up to the expectations of these men, proving itself entirely worthy of the unspeakable contempt of all these men. The people of Goethe and Hölderlin has indeed chosen as its dream-prince a man who speaks the vilest German bristling with grammatical faults and dirty terms of abuse, the German of a drunken Munich beer cellar ; and this man is worshipped just as ecstatically and unblushingly by the crowd of highbrow German Goethe-experts and Beethoven admirers as by the illiterate, hysterical sadists who call themselves Hitler-youth or Gestapo or heaven-knows what else today. Not for ever were the dreams of the great Germans to remain uncomprehended and unrealised—but that realisation was the gutter of National Socialism. And yet this band of gangsters take their stand, and not entirely without justification, on Stefan George, on Nietzsche, on Hölderlin, Kleist, Fichte, Hegel and Luther—that is precisely the mystery about the German people.

It would be rather interesting to analyse Hitler as a literary and intellectual phenomenon too, just as we analyse Goethe or Kant or Hölderlin. His style is, as we have already mentioned, that of every slightly tipsy

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German beer-drinker in any beer-cellar. The German petit bourgeois, when he is the worse for drink, is in the habit of laying about him and roaring in a frenzy, against the French, against the English, against the Jews, against the Bolsheviks—whatever happens to come into his head; and from this the style of Hitler's speeches has arisen, which for the purpose of scientific investigations, must be studied in his early period before 1933, before his speeches were touched up and polished by refined diplomats, editors and secretaries. "And yet Hitler read books which influenced him profoundly. It is a well-known fact that, even as a grown-up man and as a dictator, he still read and re-read the Red Indian stories by Karl May, a kind of late and sorry decoction of Fenimore Cooper's Red Indian tales, which are generally devoured in Germany only by school boys up to the age of sixteen years. The student of literary history could not but indicate the profound influence which this Wild West trash has exerted upon Hitler's whole mentality and philosophy of life. Still more characteristic, however, is a second book, which Hitler knows thoroughly and which must have influenced him most deeply. This is an anti-Semitic pamphlet entitled "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." Everyone who really wishes to know Hitler's

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political ideas, should read this curious pamphlet, although it belongs to the lowest of backstairs literature. The origin of this peculiar pamphlet has been completely disclosed today. It was originally a political pamphlet written by an otherwise not bad French author named Jouy against the policy of Napoleon III. Later, manifestly by order of the Czarist government and the Russian secret service, it was recast in Russia as an anti-Semitic pamphlet and propagated under State supervision by Russian anti-Semitic organisations in order to prepare the pogroms which were organised by the Russian Czarist government in those days, because these anti-Jewish persecutions were—rightly—considered a good way of warding off revolutionary moods. In this form the pamphlet was translated into German and was propagated above all in Austria at the beginning of the century by the pan-Germanic, anti-Semitic and anti-Christian groups of Schönerer and Wolff who worshipped the Old Germanic god Wotan, and from which the Austrian Hitler is directly descended. The subject-matter of the pamphlet—in its recast form—is a dialogue between Jews, one of whom instructs the other as to the existence of an international secret Jewish world-organisation which is first to transform the whole world into chaos and then to subject it

to Judaism. The Jews (according to this pamphlet) have everywhere and among all nations their confidential emissaries and secret agents ; through their medium they sow inner dissension among the nations everywhere and disintegrate national unity ; their partisans hold state appointments in all countries, they everywhere push to the top *those* statesmen who are obedient to them, and when bribery does not help, threats or violence do—and the intended result is an almost bloodless revolution in which the States, undermined from within, collapse like a house of cards and fall into the hands of the Jewish world-Camorra. The style and the whole construction of the pamphlet are somewhat like those of a detective story by Edgar Wallace, in other words cheap sensational fiction of the lowest type. For Hitler this pamphlet must have been a revelation decisive for his whole life. He who reads this pamphlet and Hitler's "Mein Kampf" side by side, will see that Hitler's own political principles are actually taken point for point from this old pamphlet ; and the memory of it still rings in the very interesting political debates which Hitler carried on with the former President of the Senate of Danzig, Hermann Rauschning, and which this most excellent author published in book form in London some time ago. This little pamphlet must in very truth have become Hitler's

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political Bible. Not only did Hitler believe that this Jewish conspiracy really exists—he considered as really possible the whole paraphernalia of world-conspiracy after the style of Edgar Wallace, complete with underground passages, trap-doors, cellars and masked murderers, with agents provocateurs and Quislings in all countries in the world, whilst before 1933 any educated person would only have regarded them as a bad joke, and he has made this technique of detective fiction his world-policy. And now comes the strangest thing of all: *this underground world-conspiracy à la Edgar Wallace has really been made possible through Hitler; this policy which seems to have originated in the cheapest kind of detective story, has through Hitler become a reality and has today conquered nearly the whole of Europe.* And Hitler has really succeeded in turning the civilised world into that Wild West with its jungles and primeval forests and murdering Red Indian tribes which were the puerile thrills of his adored author Karl May. Hitler has made the world a fifth-rate detective and Wild West novel. For this not only Hitler's Germany is to blame, but the intellectual and moral level of Europe and the whole world of today.

Now if we ask ourselves how it is that this political realisation of the German genius arose on so low a level, indeed on the lowest imaginable, this explanation sug-

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gests itself :

We must above all hold on to the idea that there is actually something like a "German doctrine", just as there is a Brahmanical, a Buddhist, a Hindu or Christian "doctrine"—only that the German doctrine has not been incarnated as that which we call a "religion"; it has rather come down, as a hidden underlying motif through centuries of German poetry, thought and feeling, and it must be deciphered from these.

If we now ask ourselves further of what this "German doctrine" really consists, then a second remarkable observation presents itself: it does indeed show a close kinship with the Indian doctrine, indeed a certain identity, in the sense in which two wholly opposite ideas are nevertheless identical; or as in mathematics a figure with positive and one with negative signs are one and the same figure, or like two twins one of whom always thinks, wants and does exactly the opposite of the other, are nevertheless genuine twins. The identity in contrast is indeed so striking that we are tempted to venture an ethnological hypothesis, for which, however, the author, who is not an expert in such matters, cannot vouch:

If it should be true—which is indeed extremely doubtful—that there was once an Aryan original race,

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which divided up into several streams, one of which migrated to India and Iran, the other to the West, and that the purest representative of the Aryan western stream is the German people—then the German people has certainly retained this native original doctrine, only that, under the influence of the occidental world, it has developed it on exactly opposite lines to the Indian doctrine. The “German doctrine”, too, does not really believe in the reality of the individual and of individual limitation, which it regards as a mere illusion. The “German doctrine”, too, knows only the one goal: to strip off this illusion as an illusion and to be merged in a higher unity and reality. But this higher reality is here not called, as in the Indian doctrine, “Brahma” or “Shiva”, it is not metaphysical, but it is of this world, and is called “Nation” (Fichte), “State” (Hegel), “Fatherland” (in the German common sense of the 19th century) or “Race” (Hitler). It follows from this, however, that the entire psychological technique of the “German doctrine” is also diametrically opposed to the Indian. It is (to use a modern notion created by the Swiss psychologist C. G. Jung) “extraverted”, turned outwards, wherever the Indian is “intraverted”, turned inwards. What the Yogi is for the Indian doctrine, the commander-in-chief and conqueror is for the German, he is the

true saint of the German ; what inner discipline is for the Indian idea, external organisation is for the German, what asceticism is for the Indian, war is for the German, and what renunciation is for the Indian, rapine, conquest and possession are for the German—the “ Nibelungen-gold ”. And yet the goal is the same in both cases : cessation of the individual ego, the stripping off of the illusion of the ego, and the being merged in a higher unity. True, German Yoga is a Yoga of endless mass-murder, as is already shown in the “ Nibelungen ” ; but the aim of this murdering is never murder as such, the aim of this conquest is not conquest, the aim of this rapine is not rapine—but a kind of suicide in the end of the world, the Horatian :

“ Si fractus illabatur orbis  
Impavidum ferient ruinae. ”

However, from this “ extraverted ” attitude of the German doctrine it also follows that it must descend deeper and deeper into the realm of the material, and while the Indian idea is purified in practice, the German idea must of necessity at every new step of realisation sink ever deeper into the mire of materiality, and the name of its latest realisation cannot possibly be anything but Hitler or Goebbels.. This seems to me the reason why the distance between idea and reality in the German

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people is so particularly great.

These remarkably nocturnal visions of streams of blood, death and mass-murder in old German poetry do not, therefore, mean murder for its own sake, not murder : “ as One of the fine Arts ”, as in De Quincey, but they mean that mass-murder in which one perishes oneself, the world-massacre in which one drowns in blood oneself, murder which is merely a variety of suicide : that is the ultimate philosophical meaning of the “ Nibelungenlied ” in the old heathen legend, in the Christianised epic, in the dramatisation by Hebbel, and in Wagner’s “ Twilight of the Gods ” (“ Götterdämmerung ”). The German’s ideal is the unbounded adventurer who conquers the whole world only to descend at last into the kingdom of the dead in the underworld and continue fighting there. He who thinks we are here indulging in mere fantasies and hypotheses, should read, e. g. the works of the leading biologist and palaeontologist of present-day Germany, Edgar Dacqué : there he will find proven that the biological meaning of the “ heroic ” human life is the merging of the individual existence in the race soul through the corridor of physical death. Whomsoever the German hates, persecutes, tortures and murders—he hates, persecutes, tortures and murders in him only his own reflection, himself : that is the “ *Ta Twāṁ Asi* ” of the German

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soul. This it is which the German calls " tragic " and " heroic " and which he regards as the highest form of human life when he says : he, the German, wants to live " tragically " and " heroically ". The briefest and best formulation for this has been found by that excellent German author Rauschning when he calls Nazism " the world-revolution of Nihilism "; only the one thing Rauschning as a German could not recognise : how deeply identical this " world-revolution of Nihilism " is with the constitution of the German soul generally.

I hope that the reader will feel the grandeur of this vision as well as its uncanniness, just as the writer does. Hitler and the German people have admirers all over the world, even among their enemies, and rightly so : it is a case unique in world history, of how a spiritually unfettered nation obsessed by itself has created in six short years a gigantic machinery and organisation of death, capable of murdering the whole of the human race and then itself ; and we shall live to see this suicide of the German people, when Nazism shall be beaten, and it will be such a suicide as will still be sung after thousands of years, as the Flood is today.

This decisive struggle of the German soul with itself—for the present war is that, and nothing else—would perhaps at a less material and imperialistic time

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have been waged on a somewhat higher plane; today it just assumes the form of a scuffle for petroleum, rubber and other useful rubbish, and its leader is rightly called Hitler. But it is not only the temporal conditions which are to blame for this level. The expression of the "German idea" is indeed only possible on two extreme planes: on so drunken, etherealised and mystic a height that it borders on insanity or passes into insanity—and then again in the roaring din of a Munich beer-cellar. Between these two there is no real expression of the German soul. We have already mentioned that the three greatest German minds became insane or were near it: Kleist was undoubtedly partially mentally deranged before he committed suicide, Hölderlin and Nietzsche were completely insane; and there are "Fragments" by Novalis which are undoubtedly not the fruits of a brain functioning in any sense normally. This list could be very much augmented: all really German geniuses were, or at least in the eyes of non-Germans seem to be, half-insane, the gifted dramatist J. M. Reinhold Lenz as well as the no less gifted Christian Grabbe, and perhaps the purest and noblest German lyric poet after Goethe and Hölderlin, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, who likewise ended in the lunatic asylum. No people in the world numbers so many insane among its

men of genius as the German.

This again, is not intended as a purely pathological reflection. The truth is that the German genius has never shown itself more beautiful and more glorious than at the threshold of madness and death. There are poems from Hölderlin's period of madness which are nothing but pure, inspired, breathing and living language, perhaps the highest that lyrical poetry has ever produced anywhere, though, as can be imagined, not much palpable sense is to be found in it; and the same applies to some of the Fragments by Novalis, of which more than a mere presentiment or a mere feeling tells us that they perhaps contain more of the profound meaning of real life than all the philosophy of the earth, although on the whole they are undoubtedly intelligible to no one; and lastly, Nietzsche's "Ecce Homo," written on the very threshold of insanity, is doubtless one of the most brilliant, seductive, and I should like to say "hypnotic" books in world literature.

The German people have always regarded themselves as a "Chosen People" which was to bring the world a kind of "redemption" one day; though the proverb "The world will one day be healed by the Germans" is of later date, yet its content lived in the hearts of the German people for centuries before it was formulated. No

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people in Europe has perhaps had the feeling of self-redemption, which is to be at the same time a world-redemption and a redemption of humanity, so strongly in its soul as the Germans at certain periods of their history. This feeling can be compared only with the feelings of the earliest Judæo-Christians. And indeed, this evinces a profound affinity of the German people with the Jews, which is at the same time a deep antagonism, and which was recognised by many great Germans, e.g. by Fichte: the idea of the “Chosen People”, which was to bring “salvation” to the world, arose, as is well known, among the Jewish people; and its product in world history is Christianity. Other nations of Europe adopted this idea and varied it, in the age of nationalism, at especially revolutionary and ecstatic moments in their history, ‘feeling themselves to be the “Chosen People”. The contemporaries and soldiers of Cromwell had within them something of the feeling that they were the direct spiritual descendants of the Biblical fighters and prophets, and the early pioneers of the American Continent were inspired by the same feeling. The French of the Great Revolution felt they were saviours of the world, likewise the men of the Russian Revolution of our time. The programme for saving the world, which the French had to offer in 1790 was not entirely original; a considerable part of its ideas

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originated in the English Civil Wars and the American Wars of Independence. In the same way the world saving programme of Bolshevism is a product of the Germans Hegel, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. The French and the Russians, however, have given this programme an individual, plastic, world-historical expression, which has not failed to influence the shaping of world politics, and will not fail to influence it. A Robespierre or Danton was not merely a parrot-like repeater of English ideas ; he was in very truth inspired by the national spirit of Jeanne d'Arc ; similarly the Russians of 1917 were no mere professors of Marxism ; there was in them something of the national ecstasy of Dostojewskij, who preached the "election" of the Russian people and world-redemption through the Russian people (especially in his famous speech on Pushkin)—even if these Bolsheviks severely rejected and still reject Dostojewskij's Christian idea of world-redemption.

German history presents a totally different picture. The consciousness of being a "Chosen People" has been stronger in the Germans than in any other people : but it never found political expression. From the Peasant Wars at the turn of the XV and XVI centuries down to Hitler, the German people had no revolution which in any way influenced world happenings. Neither did it

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produce any political ideas which would in any sense justify a claim to "world-redemption"—with the sole exception of Karl Marx; who felt he was a German scholar and revolutionary, but in whom in truth there gleamed the vision of world-redemption of his Jewish forefathers, the Biblical prophets, and whose ideas were more misunderstood and distorted than understood, more misused politically than really applied, in Germany itself. The German "world-redemption" was ever something entirely unreal, dreamlike.

German classicism and post-Classicism—e. g. Schiller, Hölderlin, Jean Paul—toyed again and again with the notion of a "better world". It had nothing to do with reality, however. In Schiller's view, which permeates all his great poetical works, all that is better and more beautiful must perish in this world of ours; it can exist only in the realm of dreams. Hölderlin's Greece and Jean Paul's ideal world, these are indeed—a realm of dreams. Political works of importance are very rare down to 1870. Schiller, definitely possessed of political talent, never wrote one. In Kant's exquisite little book on "Eternal Peace," all the political philosophy is borrowed from the French Revolution and from Rousseau. In Novalis's "Christendom or Europe" and in the dreams of the German Romanticists this "world-redemption" is simply

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identical with the Catholic hierarchy of the Middle Ages. Since the War of 1870-71 and the foundation of the Prussian-German Empire, this German idea of "world-redemption" is identified in ever-increasing measure with the purely cynical worship of might, merging completely with the dream of German world-domination. The beginning of this merging—which was still comparatively cultured—may be said to be represented by the famous historian Heinrich von Treitschke; its end is Hitler and Nazism, in which once more both elements come into clear relief: German "world-redemption" in contrast—and in competition with the Jewish and Christian idea of redemption and Messianism; and secondly, German world-domination as the supposition, and really also as the whole content of this "German world-redemption" by which the world is to be "healed." The so-called German Revolution is really a nihilistic revolution for the simple reason that it proclaims no world-historical idea. Without ever having produced a real, positive revolutionary idea, it utilises the weapons of revolution for a fight to obtain world-domination.

Thus, however, a contempt of the greatest Germans for the German people is comprehensible: between these two utterly extreme planes there was no connection, and when reality prevailed over the dream, and

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embodied it as reality, this necessarily had to happen,—indeed could only happen, on the very lowest level imaginable, and its name is Hitler and Goebbels.

If it has to be admitted that, among the really leading statesmen of France, Great Britain and other countries between 1933 and 1938 not a single one was clear-seeing and far-seeing enough to foresee what we called, •with Rauschning, “the German world-revolution of Nihilism”, and to combat it in time (—of course a man like Churchill knew it, but at that time he was not taken seriously—), then, on the other hand; it cannot be denied that there were greater and more ingenious statesmen in earlier times who already foresaw the future centuries in advance; and here the great politicians of the old Austrian monarchy, who were ever the political antagonists par excellence of this “German soul”, play a very honourable part as psychologists. The Empress Maria Theresia and her statesmen in the 18th century had only Frederick the Great to face, not Hitler, and yet that motherly woman felt the destructive and world-disintegrating force in the deformed, cynical and energy-laden “roi de Prusse”, she saw Hitler’s shadow behind him and would have destroyed the one with the other, if other States, concerned with the “balance of power” in Europe, had not fallen into her arms. The same applies with still greater force to the

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great Austrian statesman at the beginning of the 19th century, Prince Clemens von Metternich, who, as a matter of fact, was not born an Austrian. He said over and over again that the unification of the German people would be accompanied by a nihilistic German world-revolution compared with which every other revolution is child's play, and which, if not combated in time, would disintegrate and dissolve the morality of the whole world. "The real Jacobins are not in Paris—they are in the great Prussian General Headquarters" was one of his favourite phrases; and yet Metternich could study the real German soul and its riddles only in a miniature model, the so-called "spirit of the German Wars of Liberation" before and after 1813, which, it is true, already bore in some episodes a few very characteristic features of Nazism, race-hypnosis, anti-Christianity, anti-Semitism, and that certain hysterical mass-murder fanaticism which we know for instance from Heinrich von Kleist—and lastly too, a kind of cult of death, of horror, of blood and earth—briefly, as it was called in Germany itself in those days "the nocturnal aspects of the human soul" ("die Nachtseiten der menschlichen Seele")—which again appears to us as a kind of vulgarised and perverted copy of the ancient Indian Kali cults.<sup>4</sup>

Chiefly the philosopher G. H. Schubert, the narrator E. Th. A.

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Metternich's prophecy of a coming "German world-revolution" certainly belongs to the most gifted political visions; but the course that he took to combat this world-revolution in anticipation was historically impossible. Metternich lived and worked in a time of rising nationalism whose roots lie mainly in the great French Revolution. He rightly saw in nationalism the actual driving factor of the coming German revolution; but he tried to fight this nationalism as a whole, i. e. the national aspirations of all peoples of Europe and their demand for national autonomy and unity, and this with a kind of political police throughout Europe which here and there assumed the character of a military intervention (e. g. in Italy), but always maintained that of a merely political police. That was not the way to combat young European nationalism; it could not be combated at all, for it was a natural growth which could not be rooted out; and so Metternich, in spite of his great statesmanly sagacity took the wrong line politically, thus in reality sealing the doom of the Austrian monarchy. The next really great statesman produced by the

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Hoffmann, and the so-called "dramatists of destiny" ("Schicksals-dramatiker"—Zacharias Werner, Müllner, Houwald, and others) who are particularly interesting in this respect, and who in their ecstatic worship of Blood and death, should be made the subject of a special analysis.

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territory of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the Czech T. G. Masaryk, saw this danger of destructive pan-Germanism as a danger to Europe and to the world, even before 1914 just as clearly as, in fact more clearly than Metternich; and he has analysed it more than once in his philosophical and sociological works and studies in the history of literature; and by the establishment of the Czechoslovakian Republic and the liquidation of the old Austro-Hungarian monarchy in 1918 he indeed made the last attempt to nip the outbreak of this pan-Germanic revolution in the bud.

Masaryk has often been reproached with having, by the liquidation of the great Austro-Hungarian State which he propagated and finally carried through, in fact destroyed the historical counterpart of the Prussian-German pan-Germanism, namely the Austro-Hungarian Empire, thus unconsciously paving the way for German unification, hegemony and—Hitler. Only he who is totally uninformed in matters political, can really raise this objection to Masaryk. The Austro-Hungarian monarchy had been internally so enfeebled since 1866-67 that it would never again have become anything different from what it was in the World War of 1914-1918: the vassal and slave of the German Empire and of pan-Germanism; and Masaryk rendered a service memorable

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in world-history not only to his own people, but to Europe, when he established in the heart of Europe, in the very midst of the German Ocean, a strong democratic bulwark, the Czechoslovakian Republic, predestined to support the defence of the democratic nations against the pan-Germanic revolution from its geographical centre. This political conception on the part of Masaryk was definitely that of a genius. He did not reckon, however, with the statesmen who, twenty years later, were to guide the destinies of the great democratic peoples of Europe, and it is certainly a great mistake in statesmanship not to reckon with the natural narrowness of human intelligence—but what fantasy, however gifted, would have sufficed to imagine in 1918 that twenty years later a whole nation whose sole crime was to whet the appetite of an insatiable beast of prey, would be deserted by all, all friends and allies, in order to satisfy for a few short moments the ravenous hunger of this beast ! And so world-history continued on its way..

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This book presents extracts from old German poets, thinkers and artists who, in one way or another, were “beyond Germany”, and we intend this expression to be understood in a threefold sense; firstly such men who,

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though Germans, were yet of such stature that at least a part of their nature stretched beyond Germany and the German mind, and who were thus enabled to offer a penetrating and profound criticism of certain aspects of the German mind, as for instance Goethe, Hölderlin and Nietzsche ; secondly, such Germans whose ideas and views were beyond the official German viewpoint, who thought more freely and with less prejudice than the majority of the German people. There were at all times also Germans who saw the German people in its connection with the great occidental culture and the political development of Europe, and who wanted to range the German nation among this general development—such as e. g. Herder, Kant, George Forster, young Görres, Georg Büchner, Heinrich Heine, and so on—just as to-day, too, there are a Thomas Mann and Heinrich Mann, a Franz Werfel, and others. We have also selected a few specimens from the earlier of these good spirits of Germany who fit into our historical period. Thirdly, this expression “beyond Germany” is also to be understood, in a purely geographical sense : in relation to such German men who were compelled to spend the best part of their lives as exiles outside Germany and most of whom also died abroad as exiles, like Heine, Börne and Georg Büchner,

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or such Germans as simply could not endure being among Germans in Germany and therefore lived abroad, for instance the philosopher Nietzsche and the painter Anselm Feuerbach.<sup>5</sup> And here we should like to add a few general remarks about German literary emigration, because without a certain historical retrospect it is absolutely impossible to understand the problem of present-day literary refugees from Germany.

Since at least 1790 the German people has not been able to achieve that condition of political balance which would have permitted them to afford genuine shelter to the fulness and diversity of the intellectual life produced on their own soil. The constant lack of political balance in the German nation, the enormous political and spiritual tension in the German people, the tendency of German statesmen towards the most brutal of solutions even in internal policy, the unrestrained berserker frenzy of the German nationalists at whatever period, have made it necessary for the German people to spit forth, as it were, its best minds again and again from decade to decade, so as to be able to continue its existence as a

The greatest German of all time, too, Goethe, occasionally considered emigrating from Germany, for instance when Napoleon, whom he highly honoured, and often called "mon empereur" in conversation, invited him to Paris. If he finally remained in Germany, it was chiefly because he lived in a petty State, the cultural life of which he himself was able to influence in a very liberal direction.

political nation at all. The history of German intellectual emigration since about 1790, which indeed deserves to be written, forms an uninterrupted chain, and if this has not always been clearly understood abroad, it is because until 1866 and 1870 in the days when Germany consisted of petty States, emigration within Germany itself was possible. For instance if a Berlin author in about 1830 or 1840 was threatened in Prussia, he could just emigrate to Munich, where he would be fairly safe from the Prussian police, in fact he could even obtain a State post there, if the Bavarian state authorities were quite sure of his anti-Prussian sentiments, as e.g. in the case of Joseph Görres.—On the other hand, two of the most prominent German scholars of that time, the brothers Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, when they were in danger at the University of Göttingen, fled to Berlin and obtained State appointments precisely because their anti-Hanoverian attitude was acceptable there. It is only since 1870-71 and the final establishment of Prussian hegemony over Germany that the situation has changed.

On the whole, however, there has been an uninterrupted stream which, like every elemental happening, shows high tide and low tide, but never completely ceases.

The first great wave washed away those German men

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of intellect who had taken part in the occupation of the territories on the right bank of the Rhine by revolutionary France, and had shown their democratic sentiments and their sympathy with the French. They now had to flee with all speed, as for instance George Forster and the young Jacobin Görres, surely the two greatest journalistic talents Germany has ever produced, with the exception of Heinrich Heine.—One of the most refined and intellectual women in Germany, Caroline Michaelis who later became the wife of A. W. Schlegel, was unable to flee from Mainz in time; in a pregnant condition she was dragged by the police through the streets of Frankfurt on the Main, spat upon by the mob, and finally interned in the fortress of Königstein, over which satisfaction of the German national honour a German dramatist by the name of August v. Kotzebue, went into ecstasies of delight.

Very soon there followed the second wave of emigration: these were first and foremost those Prussians who desired the rising of Prussia and the liberation of Germany from the Napoleonic yoke, hence were in danger in Prussia itself. In order to understand this, we must know that Friedrich Wilhelm III, the Prussian king who was defeated by Napoleon at Jena, found the Napoleonic “yoke” by no means entirely unbearable, and in any case more agreeable than the idea of allowing himself to

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be "liberated" by his Prussian subjects or even more by a levée en masse of the whole German people, as propagated by Freiherr vom Stein or the poet Kleist, and that this heroic Prussian king broke into paroxysms of sheer despair when he was forced by his generals and statesmen and at last even by the mood of the people to venture on the war of liberation against Napoleon. Among the Germans who at that time had perforce to prefer a sojourn abroad to that in Prussia, was also the great poet Heinrich v. Kleist, who from Prague (then Austrian) worked as a journalist and made propaganda in order to work up a German national rising against Napoleon; it is at that period that Kleist wrote the terrible poem which we have quoted above.

But in the end the Prussian king and the other German princes, who felt quite snug and cosy under the back flaps of Napoleon's uniform coat, had to allow themselves willy nilly to be liberated by the German people, and now, one would think, a period of comparative peace in internal politics set in. The very opposite was the case. Then came that terrible time of the "demagogue persecution" in which literally everyone in Germany who had a trace of political sense left, was banished or imprisoned, and then dragged for years from fortress to fortress, as for instance the poet Fritz Reuter.

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Dozens of German university professors and thousands of German students were the victims of these persecutions which were directed mainly against all those men who a few years previously had by their writings agitated for the Wars of Liberation against Napoleon, as for instance Görres (the same whom we mentioned above as a young "Jacobin") and Moritz Arndt.

A new wave followed in about 1830, when repercussions of the political unrest in France were felt to some extent in Germany too, and little political demonstrations took place in some of the German cities. The principal representatives of this wave of literary emigration are Heinrich Heine and Ludwig Börne, but above all Georg Büchner, who would perhaps have become the greatest German dramatist, had he not broken down as quite a young man under the mental torments of emigration (his friends and companions were tortured in German prisons), and last but not least the excellent German national economist Friedrich List, the intellectual creator of the system of German railways and the German Customs Union, who ended by suicide.

The next great wave of emigration was in connection with the unrest of 1848-49; among those who had to flee at that time were Richard Wagner, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and the poet Freiligrath; the three last named

## *Germans beyond Germany*

lived as refugees in England, and Karl Marx, as is well known, died as a refugee in London in 1883. Then followed the series of successful wars of Bismarck, by means of which Prussia established hegemony over Germany and conquered the German Imperial crown ; but immediately after the consolidation of his foreign policy, Bismarck began, in 1872, the so-called “cultural struggle” (“Kulturkampf”) against the Catholic Church, whereby Catholic Prussians were de facto degraded to the rank of second-class subjects, and he continued his internal policy of force with the persecution of the Socialists, whereby he again deprived Germany of the best democratic brains.—Our anthology ends in the eighties of last century.

But at least honourable mention should be made of the literary refugees of the World War of 1914-1918, who above all from Switzerland took up the struggle against the imperialistic German Empire, among them the distinguished poet Leonhard Frank and the greatest living German poetess Else Lasker-Schüler, as well as the philosopher Ernst Bloch, and the eminent Catholic thinker Hugo Ball (†).

The first German Republic 1918-1933 created no refugees ; it simply murdered its really democratic geniuses or tortured them to death, as for instance the philosopher and economist Walter Rathenau, the literary

## *Introduction*

historian Gustav Landauer, the economist Rosa Luxemburg and the poet Kurt Eisner, all of whom played a more or less active part in politics, for instance Rathenau who was, as is well known, German Reichsminister for Foreign Affairs, and Kurt Eisner, Bavarian Prime Minister.

And here we are at the threshold of the greatest wave of German emigration, the literary emigration under Nazism ; its great names are Stefan George, Einstein, Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Sigmund Freud and Franz Werfel, and its history can only be written by the future.

\* \* \*

Germany, the German mind, is a natural phenomenon like any other natural phenomenon, like the plague or the spring or tigers and wolves or the monsoon. It is difficult to deal with a natural phenomenon when it harms human society—extraordinary and unique remedies are required. We are happy not to have to suggest these remedies, and we confess that we do not know them ; perhaps we would not go so far with our suggestions as the greatest German of all time, Goethe, who several times expressed the view that the Germans ought to be scattered throughout the world like the Jews, an idea which just at the present day; in view of the fate of

*Germans beyond Germany*

the German Jews, would appear to be not unattractive in the sense of historic justice.—But the meaning of this discussion and of this book is not political: in this Introduction we have but attempted to give a brief outline of the German mind, as it emerges by itself today, seen through the medium of Nazism. Only to a limited intelligence will this outline appear unjust and loveless; it is indeed dictated by love, by that love which hates evil because it believes in the existence of good in the world.

JOH. WOLFGANG VON GOETHE  
( 28-8-1749 — 22-3-1832 )



## GOETHE ON GERMANS.

(From his conversations.)

⑥⑥  GERMANY is nothing, but each individual German is much, and yet the latter imagine just the opposite. The Germans must be transplanted and dispersed throughout the world like the Jews, in order to develop fully and for the benefit of all nations, the mass of goodness that lies in them."

With Chancellor Friedrich von Müller 14. Dec. 1808.

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..... "I know the dear Germans well enough: at first they are silent, then they criticise, then they put aside, then they steal and conceal."

With Riemer

29. Aug. 1816.

..... "In his displeasure he (Goethe) went as far as to say to Humboldt: the Germans are no longer bearable

*Germans beyond Germany*

except perhaps abroad, and they should be dispersed throughout the world like the Jews."

With W. v. Humboldt

15-18. Jan. 1817.

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....."We Germans are of yesterday. It is true that for the last century we have cultivated strenuously, but another few centuries must pass before as much intellect and higher culture penetrate and become general among our people as will cause them like the Greeks to do homage to beauty, to be in raptures with a pretty song, so that it may be said of them: it is long since they were barbarians."

With Eckermann,

3rd May, 1827.

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....."It is a curious thing, whether it lies in their descent, in the soil, in the free constitution or in the sane education—enough, the English seem to have an advantage over many others. We only see a minimum of them here in Weimar, and probably by no means the best of them; but what able, fine people they are! And however young and green they may be when they come here, they do not feel at all strange or awkward in this foreign land of Germany; their bearing and their deportment in society are, rather, so full of confidence and so natural as if they were masters every-

### *Goethe on Germans*

where, and as if the whole world belonged to them.— It is not a matter of birth and wealth either ; it is just that they have the courage to be what nature has made them. There is nothing perverted or warped about them, there is nothing half-hearted or crooked in them ; whatever they are, they are always absolutely complete human beings. There are some complete fools among them, I admit that heartily ; but even that is something, and carries some weight in Nature's scales.

The happiness of personal freedom, the consciousness of the English name and what significance is attached to it among other nations, is already an advantage to the children, so that both at home and in educational institutions they are treated with far more respect and enjoy a far happier and freer development than is the case with us Germans.

I only need to look out of the window in our dear Weimar to see how things stand with us. The other day when the snow lay on the ground and my neighbours' children wanted to try out their little sledge in the street, a policeman immediately approached, and I saw the poor little things flee as fast as they could. Now, when the spring sun attracts them out of their houses and they would like to have a little game with their playmates outside their doors, I always see them embarrassed, as if they were not sure and as if they feared the approach of some police officer. A boy is not allowed to crack a whip, or sing, or call out loud, immediately the police are there to forbid it to him. Everything

## *Germans beyond Germany*

with us tends to make dear youth tame prematurely and to drive out all naturalness, all originality and all wildness, so that in the end nothing is left but a humdrum pedant.

You know that scarcely a day passes without my receiving visits from passing strangers. If, however, I were to say that I took great pleasure in the individual personalities, especially of young German scholars from a certain north-easterly direction, I would have to tell a lie. Short-sighted, pale, with sunken chests, young without youthfulness : that is the picture of most of them, as they appear to me. There is in them no trace of healthy senses and pleasure in sensual things, all youthful feeling and all the joy of youth have been irrevocably driven out of them ; for if a man is not young at twenty, how can he be young at forty ? ”

Goethe sighed and was silent.

With Eckermann,

12th March, 1828.

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“ Great in understanding and in love, mediating spirits—for mediation is of the spirit too—so should Germans be, and such their destiny. Not this pig-headed craving to be a unique nation, this national narcissism that wants to make its own stupidity a pattern and power over the rest of the world ! Unhappy folk ! They will end in a smash. Do not understand themselves, that makes the rest of the world laugh at them,

*Goethe on Germans*

at first ; but after a while the world hates them for it, and that is dangerous. Fate will smite them, for betraying themselves and not wanting to be what in fact they are. She will scatter them over the earth like the Jews, and justly. For their best always lived in exile among them."

Thomas Mann, "Lotte in Weimar;" Goethe speaking. (1940)



# FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

( 1770-1843 )



*Of all German poets Hölderlin is perhaps the purest, a rhapsode in the antique sense. Whilst Goethe and Schiller were rather classicists in the late Roman style, not unlike the classicism of a Racine, Hölderlin's genius penetrated to the darker, more rugged abysses of original Graecism, and created a German-Grecian style whose heroic and unapproachable nobility once really influenced German youth, and might perhaps have been the only spiritual remedy—too feeble, alas—to counteract the infection of youth by Nazist cynicism and amorality. His translations from Sophocles and Pindar breathe a more ancient and more mysterious spirit than the originals. In 1802 Hölderlin became insane, and thus lived for 41 years as a lunatic; during this period he created some semi-comprehensible poems, which, as pure, inspired language, radiate a glory to which few works in world literature can compare. Principal works: "Hyperion" (novel in letters). Odes in antique style.*

# HYPERION AMONG GERMANS

( From the novel " Hyperion " )

**A**ND so I went among the Germans. My requirements were modest, and I was prepared to find still less. I went there humbly, like the homeless, blind Oedipus to the gate of Athens, where he was received by the grove of the gods and welcomed by refined souls.—

How different was my reception !

Barbarians from time immemorial, having grown more barbarous by dint of diligence and science and even religion, essentially incapable of the slightest divine feeling, spoilt to the marrow for the appreciation of the sacred graces—offensive to any well disposed soul by any sort of exaggeration and meanness, dull and inharmonious, like the fragments of a vessel that has been thrown away—these, my Bellarmin ! were my comforters.

It is a hard saying, and yet I say it, because it is true : I cannot imagine any people in a more tattered condition than the Germans. You see artisans, but no human beings, thinkers, but no human beings, priests, but no human beings, masters and servants, youths and elderly folk, but no human beings—is it not like a battlefield where hands and arms and all limbs lie about mangled, whilst the life-blood which has been shed flows away into the sand ?

Everyone follows his own pursuit, you will say, and

*Friedrich Hölderlin*

I say so too. But he must follow it with all his soul, he must not stifle every force in himself if it does not exactly suit his title, he must not only be what he is called, with that niggardly fear, literally a hypocrite ; with earnestness and love he must be what he is, then there will be a living spirit in his activity ; and if he has been forced into a calling, a groove where the spirit is not given living space, then let him reject it scornfully and learn to plough a field ! But your Germans like to limit themselves to what is unavoidably necessary, that is why they produce so much clumsy work and so little that is created freely and gives pure joy. That, however, could be passed over, if such people were not without feeling for all the beauty in life, if only the curse of god-forsaken unnaturalness did not lie everywhere on such a people.—

The virtues of the ancients were only brilliant faults : this was once said by a malicious tongue, I know not whose ; and yet their very faults were virtues, for a childlike, beautiful spirit still prevailed, and nothing of what they did was done without soul. The virtues of the Germans, however, are a brilliant evil and nothing more, for they are but forced work, born of craven fear, wrung from the barren heart by slavish drudgery, and they leave unsatisfied each pure soul which loves to feed on what is beautiful, which, refined by the sacred harmony in nobler natures, cannot endure, alas, the discord which cries aloud in all the dead orderliness of these people.

I tell you : there is nothing holy which is not desecrated, dragged down as a mean expedient among

## *Germans beyond Germany*

this nation ; and what is generally preserved as divinely pure even among primitive savages, is degraded to the level of an ordinary trade in the hands of these all-calculating barbarians ; nor can they act otherwise : for once a human being has been broken in, he serves his purpose, he seeks his own ends, he has no more dreams, God forbid ! He stays sedate, and when he celebrates, when he loves, when he prays, and even when the sweet festival of spring, when the season of reconciliation dissolves all the world's troubles, and charms innocence into a guilty heart, when, transfigured by the sun's glad rays, the slave joyfully forgets his fetters, when, softened by the God-inspired air, misanthropists are peaceable, like children,—when even the caterpillar becomes winged and the bee swarms, the German still stays in his groove and does not bother much about the weather.

But thou, sacred Nature, shalt judge ! As, if only they were modest, these people, and did not make themselves a law unto the loftier ones among them ! If only they did not blaspheme that which they are not ; if only they would blaspheme themselves, if only they did not scoff at what is divine !

Or is it not divine, that which you scoff at and call soulless ? Is not the air you drink better than your tittle-tattle ? The sun's rays, are they not nobler than all you wiseacres ? The springs and the morning dew refresh your grove ; can you do that too ? Ah, you can kill, but you cannot bring to life, if love does not do it, that love which is not of yourselves, which you have

### *Friedrich Hölderlin*

not invented. You take great thought how to escape your destiny, and cannot understand why your childish art does not help you ; and all the time the stars wander innocently in their courses up yonder. You debase, you lacerate tolerant Nature wherever she tolerates you, but she lives on in never-ending youthfulness, and you cannot banish her autumn and her spring, her ether you cannot spoil !

Oh, divine must she be, since you may destroy, and yet she grows not old, and in spite of you beauty remains !

It is heartrending, too, to see your poets, your artists, and all who still honour genius, who love beauty and cultivate it. The good ones, they live in the world like strangers in their own home, just like the long-suffering Ulysses, when he sat at his door as a beggar, while the shameless suitors blustered in the hall and asked : Who has brought this tramp here ?

Full of love and spirit and hope young poets grow up for the German nation ; you see them seven years later, and they wander like shadows, silent and cold, they are like soil which the foe has sown with salt so that it can never produce a blade of grass, and if they speak, woe to him who understands them, who sees in their stormy titanic power and in their protean arts only the desperate fight that their troubled, beautiful spirits fight with the barbarians among whom they have to live.

All earthly things are imperfect, that is the old song of the Germans. If only someone would tell these

## *Germans beyond Germany*

god-forsaken ones that all is imperfect in their land only because they leave nothing pure unspoiled, nothing holy untouched by their clumsy hands, that nothing thrives with them because they do not honour divine Nature, the root-cause of thriving, that really their lives are dull and troublous and over full of cold, dumb discord, because they scorn genius which lends strength and nobility to human actions and cheerfulness to suffering and brings love and brotherliness to cities and homes.

And that is why they fear death so greatly, and suffer all shame for the sake of the oysters' life, because they know nothing higher than their piece-work that they have patched up.

Oh Bellarmin ! Wherever a nation loves beauty, wherever it honours genius in its artists, there breathes a universal life-giving spirit ; there the shy mind unfolds itself, self-conceit melts away, pious and great are all hearts, and inspiration brings forth heroes. The home of mankind is in such a nation and the stranger loves to sojourn there. But when divine Nature and her artists are so insulted, alas, the purest joy of life flies away, and any other planet would be better than the earth. More and more void, more and more barren do human beings grow in such a land, and yet all of them were born beautiful ; slavish mentality grows apace, accompanied by coarse courage, drunkenness increases with cares, and hunger and the fear of starvation with luxury ; each year's blessing turns to a curse and all gods flee.

*Friedrich Hölderlin*

Woe to the stranger who wanders forth for love's sake and comes to such a people, and thrice woe to him who, like me, driven by great pain, a beggar like me, comes to such a people !—

Enough ! You know me, and will take it well, Bellarmin ! I spoke in your name too, I spoke for all who are in that land and suffer, as I suffered there.



GEORG · CHRISTOPH  
LICHTENBERG

( 1742-1799 )



*G. F. Lichtenberg has become immortal through a work which he really never wrote in the form in which it was published: namely the Aphorisms, which the publishers of his works, including his son, compiled after his death from his "waste-books" not intended for publication, and from essays. And whilst his works proper, his time satires in the style of Swift.—Lichtenberg lived in Göttingen in the State of Hanover, and so was profoundly influenced by English culture—are scarcely readable now, with these "aphorisms" he is not unworthy to take his place with the great Spanish and French aphoristic writers, Gracian, La Rochefoucauld or Chamfort, and he belongs to the few independent minds which Germany has produced.*

## APHORISMS

**S**AY, is there any other country besides Germany where people learn to turn up their noses before they learn to wipe them ?

.....

This year there is a certain kind of people, mostly young poets, who almost always utter the word German with inflated nostrils. A sure sign that with these people even patriotism is imitation. Why brag so much about being German ? "I am a German girl." Do you mean to say that means any more than if I were an English, Russian or Tahiti girl ?

.....

If on some remote island one were to come across a people all of whose houses were hung with heavily loaded guns, and who kept a constant guard at night, a traveller could not but think that the whole island was inhabited by robbers. But are things any different in the European nations ?

.....

God created man in his own image : presumably that means that man created God in his.

.....

There is more wisdom in the words: "Vox populi vox Dei" than is usually contained in four words nowadays.

.....

All the evil in the world may be attributed to

*Georg Christoph Lichtenberg*

the frequently unconsidered respect for ancient laws, ancient usages and ancient religion.

All cannot be quite right with the world, since men still have to be ruled by deceptions.

If there were still an animal superior to man in strength, which took an occasional pleasure in playing with him, as children do with cockchafers, or stuck them in collections like butterflies, that animal would surely be exterminated in the end, especially if it were not vastly superior to man in intellect. It would be impossible for it to hold out against man, unless it could prevent him from exercising his powers in any way whatsoever. Despotism is indeed such an animal, and yet it still holds out in so many places.

When we break a murderer on the wheel, it is a question whether we do not fall precisely into the error of the child, which beats the chair whereon it has knocked itself.

Among the misunderstandings or misrepresentations in the French Revolution, there is the belief that the nation is guided by a few scoundrels. Should not rather these scoundrels avail themselves of the mood of the nation?

## *Germans beyond Germany*

In no controversy that I can remember, have notions ever been so grossly misrepresented as in the present one regarding liberty and equality. Look at Paris, cries the one party, there you see the fine fruits of equality! And it is sad to hear even famous authors joining in the chorus. Just as well might I cry: You who find such great happiness in intercourse with the other sex and in love, look at the hospitals of those who have no noses! Or you who speak of the refreshment which wine affords you in the enjoyment of friendship, look at the drunkards dying by inches in the clutches of consumption, surrounded by their starving children! You fools, I should like to say, can you not learn to understand us? Oh, I believe you understand us only too well, you talk nonsense only because you fear the world might understand us. The equality we demand is the most bearable degree of inequality. As many kinds of equality as there are, including terrible ones, just as many different degrees of inequality exist, including some that are just as terrible. Destruction on both sides. Hence I am convinced that the reasonable members of both parties are not as far from each other as is supposed, and that the equality of the one party and the inequality of the other might after all be one and the same thing with different names. But what is the use of all the philosophising? This happy medium must be fought for.

.....

*Georg Christoph Lichtenberg*

It does not matter whether the sun never sets on a monarch's states, as was once the boast of Spain ; the essential thing is what the sun sees in those states during its course.

.....

One talks of good kings who, as a matter of fact, were anything but good kings, though they were good men. There is neither rhyme nor reason in this confusion of ideas. An individual can be a very good man and yet not a good king, just as he can be an honest man and yet not a good horse-breaker. Such is indeed the case of Louis XVI. Of what use were his noble sentiments ? They could not possibly make his people happy.

.....

Generally when a person is to be converted, they try to remove his opinion without touching his head ; in France they proceed more quickly nowadays : they remove the opinion and the head at the same time.

.....

To build a republic out of the materials of a demolished monarchy, is certainly a difficult problem. It cannot be done until each stone has been re-hewn, and that takes time.

.....

No prince will ever define a man's worth by his favour, for it is a deduction, founded on more than only one experience, that a ruler is mostly a bad man. The

## *Germans beyond Germany*

one in France bakes pies and deceives honest maidens, the King of Spain fornicates to the sound of kettle-drums and trumpets, the last King of Poland, who was the Elector of Saxony, shot his court-jester in his posterior with a pea-shooter, the Prince of Löwenstein in a great fire lamented the loss of nothing but his saddle ; most of the other rulers of this world are drummers, petty officers, hunters. And these are the highest among men ; how then can things be at all bearable in the world ? Of what use are the introductions to commerce, the books on national welfare, the fathers of families, when a fool who knows no superior except his stupidity, his caprice, his harlots and his valet, is lord over all ? Oh, that the world might one day awake, and even if three millions died on the gallows, yet fifty to eighty millions might perchance be the happier for it. Thus once spoke a wig-maker at an inn in Landau, but he was rightly taken to be raving mad ; he was seized, and before he could be taken into custody, he was struck dead by a corporal with his stick ; the corporal lost his head.

.....

The great with their long arms often do less harm than their valets with their short ones.

.....

There are really very many people who read only so as not to have to think.

.....

If a book and a head collide and make a hollow

*Georg Christoph Lichtenberg*

sound, is it always in the book ?

.....

I believe very many people forget their preparation for the earth over that for heaven.

.....

If religion is to taste sweet to the masses, it must necessarily have something of the haut goût of superstition.

.....

Carved saints have done more in the world than living ones.

.....

I scarcely think it will be possible to prove that we are the work of a supreme being, and not rather that we have been put together by a very imperfect being as a pastime.

.....

First we must believe, then we believe.

.....

Doubt everything at least once, even the statement :  
 $2 \times 2 = 4$ .

.....

If I say: Keep your teeth clean and rinse your mouth every morning, it is not so easy to obey, as if I say: Use your two middle fingers for it, over the cross. The human tendency to mysticism. Utilise it.

.....

*Germans beyond Germany*

Nothing can be more conducive to peace of mind than having no opinion at all.

.....

If we educate the mothers, we educate the children in the womb.

.....

In many a work of a famous man I would prefer to read what he crossed out rather than what he has left in.

.....

Most dogmatists defend their articles not because they are convinced of the truth of them, but because they have once maintained the truth of them.

.....

Is it not curious that each man is allowed to be his own doctor, and his own advocate too, but as soon as he wants to be his own priest, people wail and lament over him, and the gods of the earth interfere ? What can be the reason why the gods of the earth are so concerned for the eternal welfare of men since they often neglect their earthly welfare in so irresponsible a manner ? The answer is not very difficult.

.....

In the usual reflections of men as to the being that has brought forth the world, there is obviously a large admixture of religious, unphilosophical nonsense. The exclamation: What a being that must be which has made all that ! is not much better than this : What kind of

*Georg Christoph Lichtenberg*

mine is that in which the moon has been found ! For first of all one should ask whether the world has been made, and secondly whether the being that has made it, would be capable of making a repeater watch of brass, I mean, of melting the brass, forging it into plates, dividing and filing the wheels. I do not think so ; only a human being can do that, and a more perfect human being would think out all sorts of other devices too. But if our world was ever made, then it was made by a being which is as little on the level of humanity as the whale belongs to the race of larks. Hence I cannot sufficiently wonder when famous men say that there is more wisdom in a fly's wing than in the most elaborate of watches. The sentence means nothing more than : Mosquitoes' wings cannot be made in the way in which watches are made, but repeater watches cannot be made in the way in which mosquitoes' wings are made. One must be reasonable, and not trouble about this kind of unnecessary canting allusions.

.....

Out of the emptiness of the heart the mouth speaketh. I have oftener found this true than the contrary sentence.

.....

The fact that sermons are preached in churches does not therefore make lightning conductors unnecessary on them.

.....

*Germans beyond Germany*

Probably no invention was easier for man than that  
of a heaven.

.....

I would give a lot to know for whom those deeds  
were really done which are supposed to have been done  
pro patria.

.....

**IMMANUEL KANT**

( 1724-1804 )



*Immanuel Kant is the most prominent of German philosophers. It is worth noting that he never consented to deny from opportunism his original sympathy for the French Revolution, as all the famous German philosophers of his era, especially Hegel and Fichte, later did. In other respects he is truly German in his mixture of radical thinking, which is deterred by no consequences and complete loyalty as a Prussian subject who nervously finds an evasion for each keen thought. In all his writings, too, and in his whole life, this mixture of intellectual keenness and professorial pedantry is to be found. Principal works: "Criticism of Pure Reason" ("Kritik der reinen Vernunft"), "Criticism of Practical Reason" ("Kritik der praktischen Vernunft").*

## ETERNAL PEACE

(“Der Ewige Friede” 1795)

**T**HE immediate occasion for my writing this essay was the satirical sign of a Dutch inn, representing a cemetery, with the inscription “Eternal Peace”.\*

### SECTION I

which contains the preliminary Articles for Eternal Peace among States.

1. “No peace treaty shall be taken as such, which has been concluded with the secret reservation of the material for a future war.”
2. “It shall not be permitted for any state which exists for itself (small or large, the same here applies to both) to be acquired by another state by inheritance, exchange, purchase or gift.”
3. “Standing armies (*miles perpetuus*) are gradually to cease entirely.”

For they incessantly threaten other states with war by the readiness to appear always prepared for it; incite them to outdo one another in the mass of the equipped, which knows no bounds, and while, owing to the cost

---

\* But the real reason was the Peace of Basle of 7th April 1795 which, as Kant foresaw, only bore the seed of a fresh war in it. We publish only selected portions of the whole lengthy essay, as well as of the following essays by Kant. (ED.)

### *Immanuel Kant*

applied thereto, peace ultimately becomes even more oppressive than a short war, they themselves are the cause of wars of aggression, in order to get rid of this burden ; moreover, to be hired in order to kill or to be killed appears to contain a use of human beings as mere machines and instruments in the hand of another ( the State ) which is scarcely consistent with the right of humanity in our own person. The exercise in arms undertaken voluntarily and periodically by citizens in order to safeguard themselves and their native land against attacks from without, is in quite a different case.

4. "No State debts are to be incurred in relation to external State transactions."

For the purpose of seeking help outside or inside the State for the benefit of national economy ( improvement of roads, new settlements, acquisition of granaries for those dreaded years when crops fail, etc. ) this source of help is beyond suspicion. But as a counteracting machine of the powers against one another, a credit system of increasing debts stretching into the dim and distant future, which are, however, always secured for present demand ( because this will not be made by all the creditors at the same time ), is a dangerous financial power, namely a treasure for waging war, which exceeds the treasures of all other states put together.—This facility of waging war, combined with the inclination thereto on the part of those in authority, which inclination seems to be ingrained in human nature, is thus a great obstacle to eternal peace ; to forbid which should

## *Germans beyond Germany*

be a preliminary article thereof, all the more because the state bankruptcy which is ultimately unavoidable, must involve other states undeservedly in the damage, which would be a public lesion of the latter.

5. "No State is to interfere violently with the constitution and government of another State."

6. "No State at war with another State is to permit itself such hostilities as must make reciprocal confidence in the future peace impossible: such as instigation of assassins (*percussores*), poisoners (*venefici*), violation of treaties, incitement to treason (*perduellio*) in the State upon which one is making war, etc."

These are dishonourable stratagems. For some sort of confidence in the mentality of the enemy must still remain in the midst of war, because otherwise no peace could be concluded, and the hostility would result in a war of extermination (*bellum internecinum*); as war is only the sad emergency measure in the condition of nature (where no tribunal is at hand, which could judge validly) to maintain one's right by force.—From which it follows: that a war of extermination, wherein the destruction can hit both sides simultaneously and with the latter also all that is right, would allow eternal peace to exist only in the vast cemetery of the human species. Such a war, therefore, and consequently also the use of means which lead thereto, must be absolutely

## *Immanuel Kant*

forbidden.—That, however the means mentioned unavoidably lead thereto, is evident from this : those hellish arts, as they are base in themselves, when they have come into use, do not long keep within the bounds of war, but also pass over into the state of peace, and would thus entirely nullify its purpose.

\* \* \*

### SECTION II

which contains the definite Articles for Eternal Peace among States.

#### FIRST DEFINITE ARTICLE FOR ETERNAL PEACE

The civil constitution in each State shall be Republican.

The Republican constitution is the only one which is founded firstly on principles of the freedom of the members of a society (as human beings), secondly on principles of the dependence of all on a single, common legislation (as subjects), and thirdly according to a law of their equality as citizens—the only one which results from the idea of the original Social Contract, whereon all just legislation of a people must be based. It is, therefore, as regards justice, in itself that constitution which is the original basis for all the forms of civil constitution ; and now there is only the question : whether it is the only one which can lead to eternal peace ?

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Now the Republican constitution, besides the purity of its origin, having originated in the pure source of the idea of justice, has also the expectation of the desired consequence, namely eternal peace, whereof the following is the reason.—If ( and it cannot be otherwise in this constitution ) the consent of the citizens is required in order to decide whether there shall be war or not, nothing is more natural than that, as they would have to determine on all the miseries of war for themselves ( for instance : to fight themselves ; to pay for the cost of the war out of their own possessions ; scarcely to repair the devastation which it leaves behind ; and lastly, as an excess of evil, to take upon themselves a burden of debt which will embitter even peace, and which, owing to approaching ever new wars, can never be cancelled ), they will deliberate very carefully before beginning so terrible a game : on the contrary, in a constitution wherein the subject is not a citizen hence the constitution is not Republican, it is the easiest thing in the world, because the sovereign is not a fellow-citizen, but the owner of the State, who does not suffer the slightest loss in his banquets, hunting parties, country-seats, court festivals etc. through the war, hence can decide on a war as a kind of pleasure party from insignificant causes, and can, for the sake of decency, and with indifference, leave the justification thereof to the diplomatic corps which is at all times ready to produce the same.

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*Immanuel Kant*

SECOND DEFINITE ARTICLE FOR ETERNAL  
PEACE

Cosmopolitan Law shall be founded upon a FEDERALISM of free States.

Nations as states can be judged as individual persons, who in their natural state ( i. e. in the absence of external laws ) injure each other through their very juxtaposition, and each one of which, for the sake of its safety can and should demand of the other to enter with it into a constitution resembling a civil constitution, wherein the right of each one can be secured. This would be a League of Nations, (" Völkerbund ") which need not, however, be a State of nations.—

Just as we regard with great contempt the attachment of savages to their lawless freedom to fight incessantly rather than to subject themselves to a lawful coercion to be constituted by themselves, and their consequent preference for mad freedom as against reasonable freedom, just as we look upon it as brutality, roughness and animalic debasement of humanity, even so, one would think, civilised nations ( each one united to a state for itself ) would hasten to emerge as soon as possible from such a depraved condition. Instead of this, however, each State rather sees its majesty ( for " people's majesty " is an absurd expression ) precisely in not being subjected to any eternal legal coercion whatsoever, and the splendour of its sovereign consists in his having many thousands at his command, to be sacrificed for a cause

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which does not concern them, without his (the sovereign's) having to expose himself to danger, and the main difference between the European savages and the American ones is that, whereas some tribes of the latter have been entirely eaten up by their enemies, the former know how to make better use of their conquered than to eat them up, and prefer to increase by them the number of their subjects and consequently also the mass of instruments for still more extensive wars.

As the way in which States pursue their rights, can never be a lawsuit as in the case of an external court of law, but only war, as, however, through war and its favourable issue, victory, the right is not decided, and though through the peace treaty the current war is terminated, but not the condition of war (ever to find a pretext for a new war),—there must be a league of a special nature, which may be named the league of peace (*fedus pacificum*), which would be distinguished from the peace treaty (*pactum pacis*) in that the latter sought to end merely one war, but the former sought to end all wars for ever. This league does not aim at acquiring any kind of power for the State, but solely at maintaining and securing the freedom of a state for itself and at the same time of other federated states, without the latter being compelled (like human beings in the state of nature) for this reason to subject themselves to public laws and coercion under them. The practicability (objective reality) of this idea of federation which is to spread gradually to all

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sates, and thus leads to eternal peace, can be demonstrated. For if good fortune so decrees : that a mighty and enlightened nation can form itself into a republic ( which by its nature must be inclined towards eternal peace ), then this affords a focus for the federative union of other states, in order to associate themselves with it and thus to secure the condition of freedom of the states in accordance with the idea of international law, and by means of several unions of this nature to spread itself gradually further and further.

That a nation says : " There shall be no war among us ; for we want to form ourselves into a state, i. e. set up for ourselves a supreme legislative, governing and judicial force which shall settle our disputes peaceably, " is comprehensible,—If, however, this State says : " There shall be no war between me and other states, although I recognise no supreme legislative force which safeguards my right and the right of which I safeguard, " then it is not at all comprehensible on what I want to base the security of my right, if it is not the substitute for the civil contract of society, namely free federalism, which reason must necessarily combine with the idea of international law, if any meaning is to remain in it at all.

In the idea of international law as a right to war, there is really no meaning ( because it is to be a right, not according to universally valid external laws which limit the freedom of each individual, but according to one-sided maxims to determine by force what is right ), unless it should be understood : that it serves people who

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think thus, quite right if they destroy one another and therefore find eternal peace in the vast grave which covers all the horrors of violence together with their originators.—For states in relation to one another there cannot, according to reason, be any other way of emerging from the lawless state which contains nothing but war, except that they, like individual persons, give up their wild (lawless) freedom, submit to public coercive laws and thus form a State of Nations (*civitas gentium*), which would certainly be an ever growing one, and which would ultimately comprise all the nations of the earth. As, however, according to their idea of international law, they do not want this at all, and consequently reject *in hypothesi* that which is correct *in thesi*, instead of the positive idea of a world-republic (if all is not to be lost) only the negative surrogate of a league warding off war, overcoming it and ever spreading, can stem the tide of the nefarious, hostile inclination, yet with constant danger of its outbreak. (*Furor impius intus—fremit horridus orcruento.* Virgil, Aeneid I, 294-96.) \*

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\*After a war is ended, when peace is concluded, it might not be unseemly for a nation after the thanksgiving service, if a day of mourning were appointed, to invoke Heaven in the name of the State for mercy for the great sin of which the human race is still guilty, of not wanting to submit to any legal constitution in relation to other nations, but of preferring to use, in the pride of its independence, the barbarous means of war (whereby that which is sought, namely the right of each State, is certainly not decided).—

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THIRD DEFINITE ARTICLE FOR ETERNAL PEACE

“COSMOPOlITAN civil justice shall be limited to conditions of universal Hospitality.”

In this article as in the previous articles we speak, not of philanthropy, but only of right, and in this sense Hospitality means the right of a stranger not to be treated in a hostile manner on account of his arrival on the territory of that other. The latter can refuse him admittance, if this can take place without his downfall; but as long as he remains peaceably in his place, it may not behave in a hostile manner towards him. It is not a right of sanctuary which the stranger can claim (for which a special, benevolent contract would be required, making him an inmate of the same house for a certain time), but a right of visit, to which all human beings are entitled, to offer their company according to the right of common possession of the surface of the earth, on which being a sphere they cannot scatter themselves indefinitely, but must after all tolerate their fellow-creatures near them, but originally no one has more right to be in one place on the earth than anyone else.—In this way distant parts of the world can be in peaceable relations with one another which can finally become publicly legal and thus ultimately bring the human race ever nearer a cosmopolitan constitution.

If we compare with this the inhospitable behaviour of the civilised, particularly trading states of

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our continent, the injustice which they show in their visiting foreign lands and peoples (which they count as tantamount to conquering them) goes to alarming lengths. America, the Negro lands, the Spice Islands, the Cape etc. were to them at the time of their discovery, lands which belonged to no one; for they counted the inhabitants as nothing.

China and Japan (Nippon), which had made the experiment with such visitors, have therefore wisely discouraged foreigners; the first-named, have permitted access but not settlement; the latter country permitted even access only to a single European nation, the Dutch, whom, however, they exclude like prisoners from intercourse with the natives.

The worst of it (or, viewed from the standpoint of a moral judge, the best of it) is, that they do not even enjoy this violence, that all these trading companies are on the verge of collapse, that the sugar-growing islands, that seat of the most cruel slavery imaginable, yield no real profit, but are only the means to an end, and not a very praiseworthy end either, namely the training of sailors for war fleets, and thus again serve for making wars in Europe, and these are powers which make much ado about piety, and while they drink unrighteousness like water, wish to be considered as the elect in orthodoxy.

As the prevalent (closer or more distant) intercourse among the nations of the earth has now advanced to such a degree that an infringement of law in one place

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on earth is felt in a 11 : the idea of cosmopolitan civil justice is not a fantastic and extravagant conception of law, but a necessary supplement to the unwritten codex not only of the State but also of international law for the right of man, and thus for eternal peace ; for it is only on this condition that one may flatter oneself to be continually approaching nearer to that eternal peace.

#### FIRST COROLLARY

#### On the Guarantee of Eternal Peace.

That which gives this guarantee, is no less than the great artist Nature (*natura daedala rerum*), from whose mechanical course reasonableness shines forth visibly, to let concord grow through the discord of human beings, even against their will.—The use of the word Nature is, moreover, in a case like the present, when it is a question of mere theory (not of religion) more seemly for the limitations of human reason (which, in consideration of the relationship of effects to their causes, must keep within the limits of possible experience) and more modest than the expression of a Providence recognisable to us, with which we presumptuously don the wings of Icarus, in order to approach the secret of its impenetrable purpose more nearly.

The idea of cosmopolitan law presupposes the separation of many neighbouring States independent of one another ; and although such a condition is in itself already a condition of war, (if a federative union

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of these States does not prevent the outbreak of hostilities) : even that condition is, however, according to the idea of reason, better than the melting together of the States through one power outgrowing the others and changing into a universal monarchy ; because with the increased extent of the government, the laws lose more and more of their emphasis, and a soulless despotism, after it has exterminated the seeds of good, lapses into anarchy in the end. But it is the desire of each State (or its sovereign), to attain to the condition of eternal peace, by means of ruling the whole world if possible. Nature, however, wills it otherwise.—She uses two means of preventing the mingling of peoples and of separating them, the difference of languages and religions, which, it is true, contains the inclination to mutual hate and the pretext for war, but yet, with growing culture and the gradual approach of mankind to a greater agreement in principles, paves the way towards understanding in a peace which is produced and secured not, like that despotism (in the cemetery of freedom), by the weakening of all powers, but by their equilibrium in their liveliest rivalry.

## APPENDIX

Politics says : "Be subtle as the serpent"; morality adds (as a restrictive condition) : "and without guile like the dove." If both cannot exist together in one command, then there is really a conflict between politics and morality ; but if both are absolutely to be united, then the idea of an antithesis is

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absurd, and the question as to how that quarrel is to be settled, cannot be formulated even as a problem.—

Now the practical man ( for whom morality is mere theory ) bases his barren negation of our good-natured hope ( even allowing for “ought” and “can”) really on this : that he claims to foresee in the nature of man that he will never want that which is required to bring about the purpose which is to lead to eternal peace.

So then it means : he who once has the power in his hands, will not allow laws to be dictated to him by the people. A State which is once in possession of not being subjected to external laws, will not, with regard to the way in which it is to seek its right against other states, make itself dependent on their judgment-seat, and even a continent, if it feels superior to another, which is not even in its way, will not leave unused the means to strengthen its power by robbing or even by ruling that continent ; thus, then, do all plans of the theory for states’, international and cosmopolitan civil justice melt away into vain, impracticable ideals ; whereas a practice which is based on empirical principles of human nature, which does not think it low to glean instruction for its maxims from the way the world goes, alone can hope to find a safe foundation for its edifice of State policy.

Certainly, if there is no freedom and no moral law based thereon, but if all that happens or can happen is merely mechanism of nature, then is politics ( as an art of utilising this to govern human beings) the whole

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practical wisdom, and the idea of justice is a thought void of content. If, however, one finds it absolutely necessary to combine this thought with politics, indeed to raise it to a restrictive condition of the latter, then the compatibility of politics and morality must be admitted. Now I can imagine a moral politician, i. e. one who takes the principles of state policy in such a way that they can exist together with morality, but not a political moralist, who fashions a morality to suit the advantage of the statesman.

Instead of the practice, of which these diplomatic men boast, they deal in machinations, their only concern being to flatter the powers that be (so as not to forego their private advantage) and to sacrifice the people and possibly the whole world.—The maxims of which they make use for this (though they do not give utterance to them) amount approximately to the following sophistic maxims.

i. *Fac et excusa.* Seize the favourable opportunity to take arbitrary possession (either of a right of the State over its people, or over another, neighbouring people); it will be far easier and neater to explain the justification and to disguise the violence after the deed (especially in the first case, where the supreme force in the interior is immediately also the legislative authority, which must be obeyed without reasoning), than to think out convincing reasons first and moreover have to wait for counter-reasons. This audacity in itself gives a certain appearance of inner conviction as

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to the legality of the deed, and the god *bonus eventus* is the best lawyer afterwards.

2. *Si fecisti, nega.* Whatever crime you yourself have committed, e. g. to drive your people to despair and thus to revolt, deny that it is your fault ; declare that it is the fault of the disobedience of the subjects, or also, when you seize a neighbouring people, the fault of the nature of man, who, if he does not anticipate the other with violence, can safely count upon the latter's anticipating him and seizing him.

3. *Divide et impera.* That is : if there are certain privileged heads among your people; who have simply chosen you as their overlord (*primus inter pares*), then disunite them among themselves and set them at variance with the people : now support the latter while pretending greater freedom, and then all will depend on your absolute will. Or in the case of foreign States, the stirring up of disagreement among them is a fairly safe way of subjecting one after another to you while seeming to support the weaker.

Now of course no one is deceived by these political maxims ; for they are all universally known ; but they have no cause to feel ashamed, because of the obviousness of that injustice : for, as great powers are never ashamed of the judgment of the common herd, but only of one another, and as, in the matter of those principles, it is not the revelation but only their failure that can make them ashamed, ( for with regard to the

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immorality of the maxims they are unanimous) : there thus always remains to them political honour, upon which they can safely count, namely that of the increase of their power in whatever way it may have been acquired.

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From all these serpentine twistings of an unmoral worldly wisdom to bring about the condition of peace among men, from the warlike condition of the state of nature, so much at least is clear : that human beings cannot escape from the idea of justice either in their private affairs or in their public affairs and do not trust themselves to found politics openly on mere tricks of worldly wisdom, and consequently to withdraw all obedience from the idea of public justice (which is particularly striking in international law), but do it all honour in itself, even though they may think out a hundred evasions and excuses, to elude it in practice, and to attribute to cunning force the authority of being the origin and the conception of all justice.

The proverbial sentence "*Fiat justitia, pereat mundus*", which, being interpreted, means "Let justice be done, though all the rascals in the world may perish together in the process", which, though it sounds somewhat boastful, is a true, valiant legal principle which cuts off all crooked ways indicated by cunning or violence ; only that it should not be misunderstood and perhaps understood as a permission to use its own right

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with the greatest severity ( which would militate against ethical duty ), but as an obligation of those in power not to deny or to lessen anyone's right from disfavour or out of pity for others ; wherefore preferably an inner constitution of the State established according to pure principles of justice, but then also the union thereof with other neighbouring or even distant States analogous to a universal State for a legal settlement of their disputes is required.—This thesis means nothing but this : Political maxims must not start from the welfare and happiness of each State which is to be expected from obeying them as the supreme principle of State wisdom, that is, not from the aim which each of them sets itself, but from the pure idea of legal duty ( from the "ought", the principle of which is given *a priori* by pure reason ), whatever the physical consequences thereof may be.—The world will certainly not perish because the bad people become fewer. Moral evil has the quality, inseparable from its origin, that, in its intentions it is hostile to itself and destroys itself ( especially in relation to others similarly minded ) and so makes room for the ( moral ) principle of good, although in a slow progress.

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If it is duty, if at the same time there is a well-founded hope of realising the condition of a universal justice, even though only in an approach thereto progressing into infinity, then eternal peace which follows on the peace-treaties which have hitherto been falsely so-called ( and which are really armistices ), is not

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a vain idea, but a problem which, solved by slow degrees, constantly approaches nearer to its goal, because it is to be hoped that the times in which the same progress is made, are growing shorter and shorter.

# IDEA FOR A GENERAL HISTORY WITH A COSMOPOLITAN INTENTION

(From the essay "Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in  
weltbürgerlicher Absicht" 1784.)

Man has a tendency to gregariousness: because he feels himself more a man in such a state, i.e. he feels the development of his natural gifts. He has however, also a strong inclination to segregation (isolation): because at the same time he finds in himself the unsociable quality of wanting to order everything according to his own will and therefore expects opposition from all quarters, just as he knows of himself that he, on his part, is inclined to oppose others. Now it is this opposition which awakens all powers of man, which causes him to conquer his inclination to idleness and, driven by ambition, lust of power, or greed, to secure for himself a position among his fellow-creatures, whom he does not suffer gladly, but with whom he cannot dispense either.

Without those unsociable qualities, in themselves not pleasant, in which that opposition originates, which each one must necessarily encounter in his selfish pretensions, and in an Arcadian pastoral society of perfect harmony, contentment and mutual love, all talents would forever remain in an embryonic state; men, as good-natured as the sheep they tend, would scarcely impart any greater value to their existence than that of their domestic animals; they would not fill the void in creation in consideration of its purpose, as rational nature.

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Thanks be to Nature, then, for the unsociableness, for the enviously emulative vanity, for the insatiable greed to possess and also to rule ! Without them all estimable natural gifts in humanity would slumber eternally, undeveloped. Man wants concord ; but Nature knows better what is good for his species ; she wants discord.. He wants to live at his ease and cheerfully ; but Nature wants him to leave indolence and inactive contentment and precipitate himself into work and hardships, so as to find out means to extricate himself wisely from the latter too.

The greatest problem for the human race, to the solution of which Nature forces it, is the achievement of a civil society administering universal justice. As it is only in society, indeed in that society which has the greatest freedom and consequently a radical antagonism of its members and yet the most exact determination and security of the limits of this freedom, so that it may exist with the freedom of others,—as it is only in such a society that the highest purpose of Nature, namely the development of all their gifts, can be attained in the human race, and as Nature also wants them to procure this object, as well as all other objects of their destiny, by their own efforts: a society in which freedom under external laws is found in the highest possible degree combined with irresistible force, i. e. a perfectly just civil constitution, must be the highest task of Nature for the human race—Just as trees

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in a forest, precisely because each one tries to rob the other of air and sun, compel one another to seek both above and thus reach a beautiful straight stature; whereas those which in freedom and far apart from one another, can spread their branches at their will, grow stunted, slanting and crooked,—all culture and art which adorns mankind, the most beautiful social order, are fruits of unsociableness, which is compelled by itself to self-discipline and thus through hardly-won art to develop the seeds of Nature perfectly.

This problem is the most difficult and at the same time that which is solved latest by the human race. The difficulty which even the mere idea of this task presents, is this: man is an animal which, if it lives among others of its species, requires a master. For he certainly misuses his freedom with regard to others like himself; and though as a rational being he desires a law which shall set a limit to the freedom of all, nevertheless his self-seeking animal inclination misleads him to make an exception of himself whenever he can. He therefore requires a master, who shall break his own will and compel him to obey a universally valid will enabling all to be free. But where is he to find this master? From nowhere except in the human race. But he is likewise an animal, who requires a master. He may therefore proceed as he likes: thus it is not apparent how he can obtain a head of public justice, which will itself be just; now he may seek this in a single person or in a

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society of many persons selected for this purpose. For each of them will always misuse his freedom, if he has none above him who will use force over him according to the laws. The supreme head should, however, be just for himself, and yet be a man. This task is therefore the most difficult of all; indeed its perfect solution is impossible; from such crooked wood as that of which man is made, nothing entirely straight can be constructed. Only the approach to this idea has been enjoined on us by Nature.

The problem of the establishment of a perfect civil constitution is dependent on the problem of a legal external relationship among States, and cannot be solved without the latter. What would it avail, to work at a legal civil constitution among isolated individuals, i.e. at the preparation of a common body? The same unsociableness which compelled men to do this, is in itself the cause that every commonwealth stands in external relationship, i.e. as a state with regard to states, in unrestrained freedom, and consequently one must expect from the other those very evils which oppressed isolated individuals and forced them to enter a legal civil condition. Thus Nature has again used the unsociableness of men, of even large societies and state bodies of this kind of beings, as a means of finding a condition of rest and security in the unavoidable antagonism between them; i.e. by means of wars, the feverish and never slackening preparations for them, by

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which all original gifts of the human species will be developed.

A philosophical attempt to work up general world history according to a plan of Nature aiming at perfect civil union in the human species, must be regarded as possible and even favourable to this intention of Nature.

Such a justification of Nature—or rather of Providence—is a not unimportant reason to select a special point of view in contemplating the world. For what would it avail to extol the glory and wisdom of the creation in the senseless realm of nature and commend it for contemplation, if that part of the great scene of the supreme wisdom which contains the purpose of all this—the history of the human race—is to remain an incessant objection to it, the sight of which compels us to avert our eyes in displeasure, and whilst we despair of ever discovering a complete sensible purpose in it, forces us to hope for it only in another world? •

# ON THE COMMON SAYING “ IT MAY BE RIGHT IN THEORY, BUT IT WON’T WORK IN PRACTICE ! ”

( From the essay “ Ueber den Gemeinspruch : ‘ Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht fur die Praxis ’ ” 1793. ) .

## I. ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF THEORY TO PRACTICE IN STATE LAW.

( against Hobbes )

The civil condition, regarded purely as a legal condition, is based *a priori* on the following principles :

1. The freedom of each member of society, as a human being.
2. His equality with every other member as a subject.
3. The independence of each member of a commonwealth, as a citizen.

These principles are not so much laws which the already established state gives, but according to which alone a state arrangement at all based on principles of pure reason of outward human law, is possible. Therefore :

1. The freedom as a human being, the principle of which for the constitution of a commonwealth I express in the formula : No one can compel me to be happy in his way ( how he imagines the welfare of other people ), but each one may seek his happiness in the way that seems good to himself, as long as he does not

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prejudice the freedom of others to strive after a similar object, a freedom which can exist together with the freedom of all according to a possible universal law (i. e. this right of the other).—A government which would be established on the principle of benevolence towards the people as that of a father towards his children, i. e. a paternal government (*imperium paternale*) in which, then, the subjects are compelled to behave merely passively, like minor children who cannot distinguish what is truly useful or harmful for themselves, in order to depend only on the decision of the head of the state as to how they are to be happy, and only on his goodness whether he even desires them to be so : is the greatest conceivable Despotism (constitution which does away with all freedom of the subjects, who then have no rights at all). Not a paternal, but a patriotic government (*imperium non paternale, sed patrioticum*) is that which alone is conceivable for people who are capable of rights, conjointly with reference to the benevolence of the ruler. Patriotic is the conception that each one in the state (not excepting the head of it) regards the commonwealth as the maternal womb or the land as the paternal soil, from which and on which he himself has sprung and which he must also leave behind, as it were, as a precious pledge, only to protect its rights by laws of the common will, but does not think himself entitled to subject it to use at his absolute will.

Now out of this idea of the equality of men in the

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commonwealth as subjects, the formula also results : Each member of it must be permitted to attain to each stage of a rank in it ( which can fall to the share of a subject ) to which his talent, his diligence and his good fortune can lead him ; and his fellow-subjects are not permitted to stand in his way by means of a hereditary prerogative ( as privileged persons for a certain rank ) in order to keep him and his descendants down under it forever.

As birth is no deed on the part of him who is born, and consequently he thereby incurs no inequality of legal condition and no subjection to coercive laws except those which, as a subject of the sole supreme legislative power, he has in common with all others : so there can be no inborn privilege of one member of the commonwealth as a fellow-subject before another ; and no one can bequeath to his descendants the privilege of rank which he possesses in the commonwealth, neither can he consequently forcibly debar them quasi as if they were qualified by birth for the rank of a gentleman, from attaining by their own merit to the higher grades of subordination ( of the *superior* and *inferior*, none of which is, however, *imperans*, the other being *subjectus* ). All else he may bequeath, which is goods ( not concerning personality ) and can be acquired as property and alienated by him also, and can thus bring about, in a succession of descendants, a considerable inequality in means among the members of a commonwealth ( of the mercenary and the tenant, of the landowner and the

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agricultural servants, etc.) ; only he shall not prevent the latter from being entitled to raise themselves to equal circumstances, if their talent, their diligence and their good fortune enable them to do so.—Moreover no man who lives in a legal condition of a commonwealth can fall out of this equality other than by his own crime, but never either by agreement or by force of war (*occupatio bellica*) ; for he cannot by any legal action (either his own or that of another) cease to be owner of himself.—

One can assume him to be happy in every condition, if only he is conscious that it only depends on himself his capacity or earnest will) or on circumstances for which he can blame no other, but not on the irresistible will of others, that he does not rise to an equal grade with others who, as his fellow-subjects, have no advantage over him as far as law is concerned, herein.

All right depends on laws. A public law, however, which determines for all, that which is to be legally permitted or prohibited to them, is the act of a public will, in which all right originates, and which itself, therefore, must not be able to harm anyone. For this, however, there is no will possible except that of the whole people (as all decide for all, consequently each one for himself) ; for it is only himself that no one can harm.

The subject must be in a position to assume that his sovereign does not want to wrong him. Consequently, as each person has his secure rights which he cannot give

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up even if he wanted to, and on which he himself is entitled to judge; any injustice, however, which in his opinion, is being done to him, on the above assumption only occurs by reason of error or ignorance of certain consequences following from laws of the supreme power: the citizen must, with the permission of the sovereign himself, be entitled to make publicly known his opinion on that which among the sovereign's orders appears to him to be an injustice to the commonwealth. For, to assume that the sovereign cannot on occasion err or be ignorant of a matter, would represent him as being endowed with divine inspirations and exalted above humanity. Thus the freedom of the pen—kept within the limits of respect and love for the constitution wherein one lives; by the liberal mentality of the subjects, which is in addition inspired by the former, (and herein the pens restrain one another of themselves, so that they may not lose their freedom),—is the only palladium of the people's rights.—

In every commonwealth there must be an obedience in the mechanism of the constitution according to coercive laws (which are generally applicable) but at the same time a spirit of freedom, because as regards general human duty, each one demands to be convinced through reason that this coercion is justified, so that he may not be in contradiction with himself.

## II. ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF THEORY TO PRACTICE IN COSMOPOLITAN LAW CONSIDERED WITH A GENERAL PHILANTHROPIC i. e. COSMOPOLITAN INTENTION

( against Moses Mendelssohn )

Just as universal violence and the distress arising out of it, finally had to force individuals to the decision to subject themselves to the coercion which reason herself dictates as a remedy, namely public law, and to enter a citizen constitution: thus too, the distress from the constant wars, in which states again seek to curtail or to subjugate one another, must at last cause them, even against their will, to enter a cosmopolitan constitution.—

For, as the progressive culture of the states with the simultaneously increasing tendency to self-aggrandisement by cunning or violence at the expense of the others must multiply wars, and through the maintenance of ever-increased standing armies kept disciplined, and equipped with ever more numerous instruments of war, must cause ever higher costs ; whilst the prices of all requirements continually rise, without there being any hope of a proportionately progressive increase in the metals which represent them ; and whereas no peace lasts long enough for the saving effected during its time to equal the outlay for the next war, against which the invention of the national debt is indeed an ingenious remedy, but one which must ultimately destroy itself: thus that

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which good will ought to have done, but did not do, must in the end be effected by impotence: each state must be so organised in its interior; that not the sovereign, on whom the war does not really impose any cost (because he wages it at the expense of another, namely the people), but the people, who have to bear the expense of it, have the decisive voice as to whether there shall be war or not.—

For the people will surely refrain from placing themselves in peril of personal poverty, which does not hit the sovereign, merely from lust of aggrandisement or for the sake of alleged, merely verbal insults.

Human nature appears nowhere less lovable than in the relationship of entire nations towards one another. No state is secured even for a moment against the other as regards its self-sufficiency or its property. The will to subjugate one another or to curtail the other's territory, is ever there; and the preparation for defence, which often makes peace even more oppressive and more destructive for internal welfare, than war itself, must never be allowed to slacken. Now against this there is no other remedy possible, but a cosmopolitan code of laws based upon public laws accompanied by power, to which each state should subject itself (on the analogy of a civil or national law of individual persons);—for a lasting general peace through the so-called Balance of Power in Europe, is, like Swift's house, which was constructed by a builder so perfectly according to all the laws of equilibrium, that, when a sparrow sat on it,

### *Immanuel Kant*

it immediately collapsed, a mere chimera.—“ But states, it will be said, will never subject themselves to such coercive laws ; and the proposal for a universal state of nations, to whose power all individual states are voluntarily to submit, in order to obey its laws, may sound ever so fine in the theory of an Abbé de St. Pierre or a Rousseau, but will not work in practice ; as it has at all times been blamed by great statesmen, but still more by sovereigns of states, as a pedantic, childish idea savouring of the schoolroom. ”

I, for my part, however, trust rather in the theory, which originates in the legal principle, how the relationship among men and states should be, and which recommends the earthly gods the maxim to proceed at all times in such a way in their disputes, that such a universal state of nations shall thereby be introduced, and thus to assume it is possible (*in praxi*), and that it can be ;—but also at the same time (*in subsidium*) in the nature of things, which forces one whither one does not like to go (*fata volentem ducunt, nolentem trahunt*). In the latter, human nature is also taken into consideration ; which, as a respect for justice and duty is still alive in it, I cannot and will not regard as so sunk in evil that moral-practical reasons shall not, after many unsuccessful attempts, ultimately triumph over that evil, and should also present human nature as lovable.



# **NOVALIS**

( Friedrich Frh. v. Hardenberg, 1772--1801 )



*The most profound, and with Friedrich Schlegel perhaps the only really original representative of German Romanticism. His narrative prose already shows the characteristic mixture of childlike playfulness and symbolical profundity which was subsequently to be imitated by the whole of German Romanticism more or less successfully. Beautiful poetry in metrical or free rhythm ("Hymnen an die Nacht"). In a certain sense, however, his most important work is his metaphysical, dreamlike, often scarcely intelligible Fragments, wherein he shows himself the only real descendant of the great, old German mysticism; it is only recently that these Fragments have been known in their entirety. On his remarkably sensual-mystic attitude to death, see the Introduction. — Abroad Novalis exerted more especially a very powerful influence upon Maurice Maeterlinck, who translated some of Novalis's works into French, and whose whole life-work (with the exception of the realistic dramas) would be quite unthinkable without Novalis ("The Blue Bird").*

*Novalis, who was destined to die so young, has for this reason often been compared to Keats, and not entirely without justification; Novalis was, however, in contrast to*

## *Germans beyond Germany*

*Keats, only very little influenced by antique culture. — His temporarily strong inclination towards Catholicism (Novalis was a Protestant) which can be observed in the extract here published, from his essay “ Christendom or Europe ” — (“ Die Christenheit oder Europa ” ), afterwards had a profound influence as a model for German Romanticism.*

# CHRISTENDOM OR EUROPE

( 1799 )

( Selections )

THOSE were beautiful, glorious times when Europe was a Christian land, when one Christendom inhabited this continent so human in constitution ; one great common interest united the remotest provinces of this extensive spiritual realm. — Without great worldly possessions one head combined the great political powers. — Immediately below the head was a numerous guild, accessible to all, which carried out his behests and strove eagerly to consolidate his beneficent might. Every member of this guild was respected everywhere, and if the common people sought consolation or aid, protection or advice from him and willingly supplied his many needs in exchange, he was in his turn protected, honoured and heard by the mightier ones, and all cherished these chosen men endowed with wondrous powers, like children of heaven, whose presence and affection spread manifold blessings.— Childlike confidence bound men to their annunciations. — How cheerfully could every man fulfil his daily task in this world, when through these holy people a secure future was prepared for him, every lapse was forgiven by them, every blot on his life effaced and purified by them. They were the experienced pilots on the great unknown ocean; in whose keeping he might

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disregard all storms and reckon trustfully on a safe arrival and landing on the shore of the world that was his real fatherland.

The wildest and most rapacious inclinations had to yield to respect and obedience to their words. Peace emanated from them.—They preached nothing but love for the holy, wonderfully beautiful damozel of Christendom, who, endowed with divine powers, was ready to rescue every believer from the direst perils. They told of long dead heavenly persons, who through affection and faithfulness to that blessed mother and her heavenly, amiable child, had resisted the temptations of this earthly life, attained to divine honours, and had now become beneficent guardian forces to their living brethren, willing helpers in distress, representatives of human frailty and active friends of humanity before the heavenly throne. With what cheerfulness the people left the beautiful gatherings in the mysterious churches, decorated with joyous pictures, filled with sweet scents and animated by sacred, inspiring music. In them the consecrated relics of former god-fearing persons were gratefully preserved in costly receptacles. And in these relics the divine goodness and almighty, the mighty benevolence of these fortunate pious ones was revealed by glorious miracles and signs. Thus loving souls preserve locks of hair and lines written by their dear departed ones and feed the sweet flame therewith till death shall reunite them. The objects which had belonged to those beloved souls were everywhere collected with tender care, and

each one considered himself fortunate in securing or even touching so comforting a relic. From time to time heavenly grace seemed to have selected a curious picture or a grave-mound on which to settle. Thither the people flocked from all districts, bearing beautiful gifts; and they brought away with them heavenly gifts in return: peace in their souls and health in their bodies.

Eagerly did this powerful peace-making society seek to allow all men to share in this beautiful faith, and sent their members to all parts of the world to proclaim the gospel of life everywhere and to make the kingdom of heaven the only kingdom in this world. Rightly did the wise head of the Church oppose impudent developments of human talents at the expense of the spirit of holiness, and premature dangerous discoveries in the realm of knowledge. So he prevented the keen thinkers from publicly declaring that the earth is an insignificant planet, for he well knew that if men lost their respect for their place of abode and their earthly fatherland they would likewise lose their respect for their heavenly home and their race, and would prefer limited knowledge to unending faith, and would grow accustomed to despising all that is great and marvellous, regarding it as the result of dead laws.

At his court all the wise and venerable men from all Europe assembled. All treasures flowed thither, shattered Jerusalem had taken its revenge, and Rome itself had become Jerusalem, the holy city of divine rule on earth. Princes submitted their disputes to the father of Chris-

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tendom, willingly laid their crowns and their splendour at his feet, indeed they accounted it a glory to spend the evening of their lives as members of this high guild, in divine meditation in solitary monastic walls. How beneficent, how suited to the inner nature of men this government, this arrangement was, is shown by the immense rise of all other human powers, the harmonious development of all talents; the great height to which isolated individuals attained in all branches of knowledge of life and arts, and the universally flourishing trade in spiritual and earthly wares in the circuit of Europe and extending to furthest India.

These were the beautiful essential traits of genuinely Catholic or genuinely Christian times. Humanity was not yet sufficiently mature, not yet sufficiently cultured for this glorious kingdom. It was a first love, which passed away in the stress of busy life, whose memory was displaced by selfish cares, and whose bond, afterwards was cried down as deception and illusion, and judged in the light of later experiences,—was torn for ever by a large section of Europeans.

This great inner schism, accompanied by devastating wars, was a remarkable sign of the destructiveness of culture for the sense of the Invisible, at least a temporal destructiveness of culture of a certain grade. Never can that immortal sense be destroyed, but it can be dimmed, paralysed, crowded out by other senses. The long continuance of a society of human beings diminishes the inclinations, the faith in its race, and accustoms them to

direct all their thoughts and aspirations solely to the means of physical welfare, the needs and the arts to satisfy this grow more and more complex, the greedy human being requires so much time to become acquainted with them and to acquire skill in them, that no time is left for calmly collecting their thoughts, for an attentive contemplation of the inner world.—

When the two clash, the present interest seems more urgent to him, and so the fine blossom of his youth, faith and love, falls off and makes room for the coarse fruits, knowing and having. In late autumn he thinks of the spring as of a childish dream, and hopes with childish simplicity that 'the granaries' shall remain full for ever. A certain loneliness seems to be necessary to enable the higher senses to flourish, hence a too extensive intercourse of human beings with one another must stifle many a holy seed, and scare away the gods, who flee from the unquiet tumult of distracting parties and discussions of petty matters.

Moreover, we are concerned with times and periods, and is not an oscillation, a change between opposite movements essential for them ? And is not a limited duration peculiar to them, is not a waxing and a waning their very nature ? But a resurrection, too, a rejuvenation in a new and vigorous form, are not these also to be expected of them with certainty ? Progressive, ever increasing evolutions are the fabric of which history is made. Whatever does not attain completion now, will attain it at a future attempt, or at a repeated one ; nothing

## *Germans beyond Germany*

which history has ever taken up, is transitory; through innumerable metamorphoses it arises again and again in ever maturer forms.

Once, indeed, Christianity had appeared with full might and glory, until a new world inspiration its ruin prevailed, its letter with ever increasing impotence and derision. Infinite idleness lay heavily on the guild of the priesthood which had grown secure. They had stood still in the feeling of their reputation and their indolence, whilst the laymen had taken experience and erudition out of their hands and taken mighty strides on the road of education. Forgetful of their real office, to be first among men in mind, understanding and education, low desires had grown up to their eyes, and the baseness and lowness of their mentality was all the more offensive in view of their clothing and their vocation. Thus respect and confidence, the supports of this and every kingdom, gradually fell away, and so that guild was destroyed, and the real rule of Rome had silently ceased long before the forcible insurrection. Only wise regulations—thus being but temporal too—still kept the corpse of the constitution together, preserving it from too speedy a dissolution ; these included e. g. the abolition of the marriage of priests.—What was more natural than that a hothead should ultimately preach a public rising against the despotic letter of the former constitution, and with all the greater success as he himself was a member of the guild.

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No historical mind can doubt for a single moment that the time for the resurrection has come, and that precisely those events which seemed to be directed against its animation and to threaten to complete its downfall, have become the most favourable signs of its regeneration. Genuine anarchy is the hotbed of religion. From the destruction of all that is positive, she raises her glorious head as the creator of a new world. As of his own accord man rises heavenwards, when there is nothing more to bind him ; the higher organs first step as of themselves out of the general uniform mixture and complete dissolution of all human talents and powers, as the original nucleus of earthly formation. The spirit of God moves upon the waters, and a heavenly island first becomes visible above the receding waves as the abode of the new human beings, as the rivered plain of everlasting life.

Let the genuine observer contemplate the new revolutionary times calmly and dispassionately.<sup>1</sup> Does the revolutionist not seem to him like Sisyphus ? Now he has reached the top of the hill, and already the mighty load rolls down again on the other side. It will never stay on top unless a heavenward attraction keeps it hovering on the height. All your supports are too feeble if your State maintains its earthward tendency. But unite it with the heavenly heights by a higher longing, give it a connection with the universe, then you will

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<sup>1</sup> This and the preceding paragraphs refer to the French Revolution.

—ED.

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have an indefatigable spring in it and your efforts will be richly rewarded. I would refer you to history ; search in its instructive connections search for similar periods and learn to use the magic wand of analogy.

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Let us now turn to the political drama of our time. The old and the new era are engaged in combat, the faultiness and indigence of hitherto existing state organisation have been manifested in frightful phenomena. What if here too, as in the realm of knowledge, the historical purpose of war were, above all, a closer and more manifold connection and contact among European states, if a new stirring of hitherto slumbering Europe were intended, if Europe should awake again, if a state of states, a political science were at hand ! Is perhaps Christian hierarchy, that symmetrical scheme of states, the idea of that new union of states.? It is impossible for temporal powers to maintain the balance of power themselves ; only a third element, which is at the same time temporal and celestial, can solve this problem. No peace can be concluded among the warring powers, all peace is but illusion, but armistice ; on the level of the Cabinet minister, of earthly consciousness, no union is conceivable. Both sides, the old and the new era, have great, urgent claims and they must press them, driven by the spirit of the world and humanity. Both are indestructible powers in the human breast : on the one hand, veneration for antiquity, affection for the historical constitution, love for the monuments of the ancestors and the ancient

glorious state family and joy in obedience; on the other hand the rapturous feeling of freedom, the unqualified expectation of mighty fields of activity, the delight in what is new and young, the unconstrained contact with all compatriots, the pride in human equality, the joy in the rights of man and in the possession of the whole, and the sturdy sense of citizenship. Let neither hope to destroy the other, conquests signify nothing here, for the innermost capital of each kingdom is not situated behind earthworks and cannot be taken by storm.

God knows there has been enough war, but it will never end if we do not grasp the palm branch which a spiritual power alone can extend to us. Blood will stream over Europe until the nations become aware of their frightful madness which drives them round in a circle, and touched and soothed by sacred music, go forth to the old altars in a motley throng, undertake works of peace, and until a great feast of love is celebrated with hot tears on the smoking battlefields as a festival of peace. Religion alone can awaken Europe again and make the peoples sure, and instal Christendom visibly with new glory on earth in its old peace-making office.

Have the nations all that an individual man has—all except his heart?—his sacred organ? Do they not, like men, become friends at the coffins of their dear ones, do they not forget all hostility, when divine pity appeals to them—if one misfortune, one sorrow, one feeling filled their eyes with tears? Do not self-sacrifice

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and devotion take mighty hold of them, and do they not yearn to be friends and confederates ?

Where is that dear old faith, the only saving faith in the rule of God on earth, where is that heavenly trustfulness among men, that sweet reverence at the outpourings of a God-inspired mind, that all-embracing spirit of Christendom ?

Christianity is threefold. One form is the creative element of religion, the joy in all religion. One is its role of mediation in general, as faith in the all-capacity of all earthly things, to be bread and wine of the life everlasting. One is faith in Christ, his mother and the saints. Choose which you will ; choose all three, it matters not, you thereby become Christians and members of a single, eternal, incomprehensible community.

The old Catholic faith, the last of these forms, was applied Christianity come to life. Its omnipresence in life, its love of art, its deep humanity, the inviolability of its marriages, its humane communicativeness, its joy in poverty, obedience and faithfulness make it unmistakably a true religion and contain the fundamental traits of its constitution.

It is purified by the tide of the ages ; in intimate indivisible connection with the other two forms of Christianity it will bless this earth for evermore.

The other continents are waiting for Europe's reconciliation and resurrection, in order to join in and become co-citizens of the kingdom of heaven. Will there not soon again be in Europe a large number of truly pious

souls, will not all truly religious minds grow full of longing to behold heaven on earth ? And love to unite and intone sacred choruses ?

Christendom must once more become alive and active and again form itself irrespective of frontiers into a visible church which will receive in its bosom all souls athirst for the supernatural, and will gladly mediate between the old and the new era.

It must once again pour out the cornucopia of blessing on the peoples. From the midst of a sacred European council Christendom will arise, and the business of awakening religion will be carried on, according to an all-embracing, divine plan. None will then protest any longer against Christian and worldly compulsion, for the nature of the Church will be true freedom, and all necessary reforms will be effected under its guidance as peaceful and formal processes of the State.

When and how to bring it nearer ? That is not the question. Only have patience, it will, it must come, the holy time of eternal peace, when the new Jerusalem will be the capital of the world ; and till then be cheerful and courageous in the perils of the time, comrades of my faith, proclaim the divine gospel by word and deed and remain faithful to the true, everlasting faith unto death.



**GEORG BUCHNER**  
**( 1813-1837 )**



This German dramatist is one of the principal prototypes of modern German expressionist post-war dramatic literature. In the fragment "*Woyzek*" Büchner—for the first time in German literature—made the attempt to write a physiological drama, which takes all its tragedy from the needs of the body, hunger and love, and from a kind of semi-mental derangement of its oppressed hero, and which works with the barest, most economical material, without the slightest rhetoric. Büchner's love for reports of facts, records and objectivity in every respect, is shown in his drama "*The death of Danton*" and in his fragmentary story "*Lenz*" in which he often quotes records word for word : and it was this mixture of prosaic objectivity and mysterious strength of poetic expression which influenced the young expressionist generation of 1918 so greatly.—His political pamphlet "*Der Hessische Landbote*" is one of the earliest democratic-revolutionary writings in the German language. Büchner died as a political refugee in Switzerland at the early age of 24 years.

# THE DEATH OF DANTON

( 1835 )

FROM ACT II.

## THE CONVENTION NATIONALE 1794

*A group of deputies*

LEGENDRE : Is there to be no end to the slaughtering of deputies ?—Who will still be safe, if Danton falls ?

A DEPUTY : What's to be done ?

ANOTHER DEPUTY : He must be heard at the bar of the Convention.—The success of this method is sure ; what could they oppose to his voice ?

ANOTHER : Impossible ; a decree prevents us.

LEGENDRE : It must be withdrawn, or an exception must be made.—I shall propose it ; I count on your support.

THE PRESIDENT : The session is opened.

LEGENDRE ( ascends the platform ) : Four members of the Convention Nationale were arrested last night. I know that Danton is one of them, the names of the others I do not know. But whoever they may be, I demand that they be heard at the bar. Citizens, I declare : I consider Danton just as pure as myself, and I do not believe anyone can reproach me with anything at all. I do not attack any member of the Welfare or Safety Committees, but I have good reason to fear that

personal hatred and personal passion might rob liberty of men who have rendered it the greatest services. The man who saved France by his energy in the year 1792 deserves to be heard ; he must be given a chance of stating his case if he is accused of high treason. ( Great agitation )

A FEW VOICES : We second Legendre's proposal.

A DEPUTY : We are here in the name of people ; no one can tear us from our places without the will of those who chose us.

ANOTHER : Your words smell of corpses : you have taken them out of the mouths of the Girondistes. Do you want privileges ? The axe of the law hovers over all heads.

ANOTHER : We cannot allow our committees to send the legislators from the sanctuary of the law to the guillotine.

ANOTHER : Crime has no sanctuary, only crowned criminals find sanctuary on the throne.

ANOTHER : Only knaves appeal to the right of sanctuary.

ANOTHER : Only murderers do not recognise it.

ROBESPIERRE : The confusion in this assembly which has not been known for a long time is proof that great things are going forward. Today shall decide whether a handful of men are to triumph over "la patrie."—How can you deny your principles so far as to grant to a few individuals today what you refused Chabot, Delaunay and Fabre

## *Germans beyond Germany*

yesterday ? Why this difference in favour of a few men ? What care I for the eulogies they indulge in for themselves and their friends ? Only too many experiences have taught us what they are worth. We do not ask whether a man has performed this or that patriotic deed ; we ask for his whole political career.—Legendre does not seem to know the names of those arrested ; the whole Convention knows them. His friend Lacroix is among them. Why does Legendre seem not to know that ? Because he knows very well that only shamelessness can defend Lacroix. He mentioned only Danton, because he thinks a privilege is attached to that name. No, we want no privileges, we want no idols !

(Applause)

In what way is Danton better than Lafayette, than Dumouriez, than Brissot, Fabre, Chabot, Hébert ? What is said about these, which could not also be said of him ? Did you spare them ? By what merit does he deserve preference over his fellow-citizens ? Perhaps because a few deluded individuals and others who did not allow themselves to be deluded, rallied around him and court good fortune and power along with him ? The more he has deceived the patriots who trusted in him, the more must he be made to feel the severity of the friends of liberty.

They want to inspire you with fear of the misuse

*Georg Büchner*

of a force which you yourselves have used. They scream about the despotism of the Committees, as if the confidence which the people have reposed in you and which you have transferred to these committees, were not a sure guarantee of their patriotism. They pretend to tremble. But I tell you, whoever trembles at this moment, is guilty; for never does innocence tremble before the public vigilance.

( General applause )

They wanted to frighten me too; they gave me to understand that the danger, in approaching Danton, could pierce through to me too. They wrote me that Danton's friends were keeping me besieged, thinking that the memory of an old connection, blind faith in feigned virtues might decide me to moderate my zeal and my passion for liberty.—And so I declare: nought shall stop me, even though Danton's danger becomes my own. We all need some courage and some greatness of soul. Only criminals and mean souls fear when they see their fellows fall beside them, because, when no longer concealed by a crowd of accomplices, they find themselves exposed to the light of truth. But if there are such souls in this assembly, then there are heroic souls here too. The number of scoundrels is not great; we have only a few heads to hit, and "la patrie" is saved. ( Applause )

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I demand that Legendre's proposal be rejected.  
( The deputies all rise as a sign of unanimous  
consent.)

ST. JUST: There seem to be sensitive ears in this assembly which cannot bear the word "blood". A few reflections on "The relations of Nature and History" may convince them that we are not more cruel than nature and time. Nature calmly and irresistibly follows her laws ; man is destroyed whenever he comes into conflict with them. A change in the elements of the air, a flaring up of the tellurian fire, a wavering in the balance of a body of water and a pestilence, a volcanic eruption, a flood, bury thousands. What is the result ? An insignificant, scarcely noticeable change in physical nature, which would have passed on almost without a trace, if corpses were not lying in its path.

Now I ask : is moral nature to be more considerate in her revolutions than physical nature ? Is not an idea justified in destroying whatever opposes it, just as a physical law is ? Is not an event which changes the entire shape of moral nature, that is, humanity, to be allowed to wade through blood ? The spirit of the age makes use of our arms in the intellectual sphere just as it uses volcanoes or floods in the physical sphere. What does it signify whether they die of a pestilence or of the Revolution ?—

*Georg Büchner*

The steps of humanity are slow, they can be counted only by centuries; behind each one there rise the graves of generations. The attainment of the simplest inventions and principles cost their lives to the millions who died on the way. Is it not simple that, at an age when history moves more rapidly, more people should become breathless? We form rapid and simple conclusions: as all men are created in equal circumstances, all are equal, except for the differences which nature herself has made.

Hence everyone may have advantages, and hence no one may have privileges, neither a single individual nor a lesser or greater class of individuals.—Every member of this sentence actually applied, has killed its people. The 14th July, the 10th August, the 31st May, are its punctuation marks. It took four years to accomplish it in the material world, and under ordinary conditions it would have taken a century and would have been punctuated by generations. Is it then so strange that the stream of the Revolution expels its corpses at each period, at each new turn?

We shall have to add a few more conclusions to our sentence; are a few hundred corpses to prevent us from drawing these conclusions?—Moses led his people through the Red Sea and into the wilderness, until the old, corrupt generation had destroyed itself, before he established the

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new State. Legislators ! We have neither the Red Sea nor the wilderness, but we have war and the guillotine.

The Revolution is like Pelias's daughters : it dismembers humanity in order to rejuvenate it. Humanity will arise from the cauldron of blood like the earth from the waves of the Flood, with strong and mighty limbs, as though it were created for the first time. ( Long, continued applause. Some members rise, in their enthusiasm. ) We invite all secret enemies of tyranny, who in Europe and throughout the whole earth carry the sword of Brutus in the folds of their garment, to share this sublime moment with us. ( The listeners and the deputies begin to sing the Marseillaise )

FROM ACT III.

THE TRIBUNAL OF THE REVOLUTION.

HERRMANN ( to Danton ) : Your name, citizen.

DANTON : The Revolution names me. My residence will soon be in nothingness and my name in the panthéon of history.

HERRMANN : Danton, the Convention accuses you of having conspired with Mirabeau, with Dumouriez, with Orleans, with the Girondistes, the foreigners and the faction of Louis XVII.

DANTON : My voice which has so often spoken for the people's cause, will easily refute the slander. Let

*Georg Büchner*

the wretches who accuse me appear here, and I shall cover them with shame. Let the Committees come here, I shall reply only before them. I need them as plaintiffs and as witnesses. Let them show their faces.

Besides, what do I care for you and your judgment ? I have told you already : nothingness will soon be my refuge ; life is a burden to me, let them tear it from me, I long to shake it off.

HERRMANN : Danton, boldness is for the criminal, calmness for the innocent.

DANTON : Private boldness should doubtless be blamed, but that national boldness which I have so often shown, with which I have so often fought for liberty, is the most praiseworthy of virtues.—This is my boldness, this it is which I use here to the advantage of the Republic against my wretched accusers. Can I be calm, when I see myself slandered in so vile a way ?—From a revolutionary like me no cold defence can be expected. Men of my stamp are invaluable in revolutions, on their brow hovers the genius of liberty.

( Signs of applause among the listeners )  
I am accused of having conspired with Mirabeau, with Dumouriez, with Orleans, of having crawled to the feet of wretched despots ; I, I am summoned to answer before inevitable, inflexible justice.— You wretched St. Just will be responsible to posterity for this blasphemy !

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HERRMANN : I summon you to answer calmly ; remember Marat, he stepped with reverence before his judges.

DANTON : They have laid hands on my whole life, so it may as well rise up and confront them ; I shall bury them beneath the weight of each of my actions.

I am not proud of it. Destiny guides our arms, but only mighty natures are its organs.—I declared war on royalty on the Champ de Mars, I defeated it on the 10th August, I killed it on 21st January, and threw down a king's head as a challenge to kings. (Repeated signs of applause.—He takes the bill of indictment :) When I glance at this disgraceful document, I feel my whole being quiver. Who are those who had to compel Danton to show himself on that memorable day ( the 10th August ) ? Who are those privileged beings from whom he borrowed his energy ?—

Let my accusers appear ! I am quite in my right mind when I demand it. I shall unmask the low rascals and hurl them back into the nothingness from which they ought never to have crawled forth.

HERRMANN ( rings the bell ) : Do you not hear the bell ?

DANTON : The voice of a man who defends his honour and his life must cry louder than your bell.

In September I fed the young brood of the

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revolution with the dismembered bodies of the aristocrats. From the gold of the aristocrats and the rich my voice fashioned weapons for the people. My voice was the hurricane that buried the satellites of despotism under waves of bayonets.

(Loud applause)

HERRMANN : Danton, your voice is exhausted, you are too passionately moved. You will conclude your defence next time, you need rest.—The session is over.

DANTON : Now you know Danton—a few more hours, and he will fall asleep in the arms of fame.

THE WELFARE COMMITTEE

*St. Just, Barrère, Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes.*

BARRERE : What does Fouquier write ?

ST. JUST : The second hearing is over. The prisoners demand the appearance of several members of the Convention and of the Welfare Committee ; They appealed to the people because witnesses were refused. The agitation of men's minds is said to be indescribable.—Danton parodied Jupiter and shook his curls.

COLLOT : The more easily will Samson seize him by them.

BARRERE : We can't show our faces, the fishwives and ragpickers might think us less imposing.

BILLAUD : The people have an instinct for letting them-

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selves be trodden upon, were it only by glances ; that kind of insolent physiognomies pleases them. Such brows are worse than a nobleman's coat-of-arms ; the fine aristocracy of misanthropy is stamped upon them. Everyone who is annoyed at receiving a condescending look from them, should help to smash them in.

BARRERE : ' He is like horny Siegfried ; the blood of the September victims has made him invulnerable.—What says Robespierre ?

ST. JUST : He acts as though he had something to say.—The sworn men have to declare themselves adequately informed and conclude the debates.

BARRERE : Impossible, it can't be done.

ST. JUST : They must be got rid of, at any cost, and if we have to strangle them with our own hands. Dare ! Not in vain shall Danton have taught us this word. The Revolution will not stumble over their corpses ; but if Danton remains alive, he will seize her by her garment, and there is something in his manner as though he could ravish liberty.

.....

I have just received a denunciation. They are conspiring in the prisons ; a young fellow by the name of Laflotte has revealed everything. He was imprisoned in the same room as Dillon, Dillon was drinking, and babbled.

BARRERE : He is cutting off his neck with his bouteille ; it wouldn't be the first time that has happened.

ST. JUST : Danton's and Camille's wives are said to be scattering money among the people, Dillon is to break out, they want to release the prisoners, the Convention is to be blown up.

BARRERE : Fairy-tales !

ST. JUST : But we shall put them to sleep with this fairy-tale. I have the notice in my possession ; on top of that, the insolence of the accused, the grumbling of the people, the confusion of the sworn men—I shall make a report.

BARRERE : Yes, go, St. Just, and spin your yarns, wherein every comma is a sword-thrust and every full-stop a severed head !

ST. JUST : The Convention must decree, the tribunal is to continue the case without interruption and may exclude from the debates any accused who offends against the respect due to the court or who causes disturbance.

BARRERE : You have a revolutionary instinct ; that sounds quite moderate, and yet it will do the trick. They cannot keep silent, Danton must scream.

ST. JUST : I count on your support. There are people in the Convention who are just as sick as Danton and who fear the same cure. They have got their courage back, they will cry out against violation of form...

BARRERE ( interrupting him ) : I shall tell them : In Rome the consul who discovered the conspiracy

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of Catilina and punished the criminals on the spot by death, was accused of violation of form. Who were his accusers ?

COLLOT (with pathos) : Get along with you, St. Just ! The lava of the Revolution is flowing. Liberty will stifle in her embraces those weaklings who wanted to fertilise her mighty womb ; the majesty of the people will appear to them amid thunder ; as Jupiter did to Semele, and will turn them to ashes. Get along, St. Just, we shall help you to hurl the thunderbolt on the heads of the cowards ! ( Exit St. Just. )

BARRERE : Did you hear the word "cure" ? They'll make the guillotine a specific for syphilis yet. They are not fighting the moderates, they are fighting vice.

BILLAUD : Up to now our path has been the same.

BARRERE : Robespierre wants to make the Revolution a lecture-theatre for morals and use the guillotine as his professor's desk.

BILLAUD : Or as a hassock.

COLLOT : On which he is not to stand, but lie.

BARRERE : That'll be easy. The world would have to stand on its head, if the so-called knaves were to be hung by the so-called good people.

A ROOM

*Fouquier, Amar, Vouland.*

FOUQUIER : I really don't know what to reply ; they

demand a commission.

AMAR: We have the scoundrels—there, you have what you require. (He hands Fouquier a paper)

VOULAND: That will satisfy them.

FOUQUIER: Truly, that is what we needed.

AMAR: Now see to it that we get rid of the matter, and they of their heads.

#### THE TRIBUNAL OF THE REVOLUTION

DANTON: The Republic is in danger, and he has no instructions! We appeal to the people; my voice is still strong enough to make a funeral oration for the decemvirs.—I repeat it, we demand a Commission; we have important discoveries to make. I shall retire into the citadel of reason, I shall burst forth with the cannon of truth and crush my foes.

. . . (Signs of applause)

*Enter Fouquier, Amar and Vouland.*

FOUQUIER: Silence in the name of the Republic, attention to the law! The Convention Nationale resolves: Whereas traces of mutiny appear in the prisons, whereas Danton's and Camille's wives scatter money among the people and General Dillon is said to break out and place himself at the head of the insurgents, so as to free the accused, whereas lastly the latter themselves have endeavoured to stir up unrest and to insult the tribunal, the Tribunal is authorised to continue

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the enquiry without interruption and to exclude from the debates any accused who may make light of the respect due to the law.

DANTON : I ask those here present whether we have scoffed at the Tribunal, the people of the Convention Nationale ?

MANY VOICES : No ! No !

CAMILLE : The wretches, they want to murder my Lucile !

DANTON : One day the truth will be recognised. I see great disaster descending upon France. That is the dictatorship ; she has torn her veil, she holds her head high, she strides over our corpses. ( Pointing to Amar and Vouland : ) Behold the cowardly murderers, behold the ravens of the Welfare Committee !

I accuse Robespierre, St. Just and their hangmen of high treason.—They want to stifle the Republic in blood. The tracks of the guillotine tumbrels are the highways on which the foreigners are to penetrate into the heart of “ la patrie. ”

How long are the footsteps of liberty to be graves?—You want bread, and they throw heads down for you ! You are thirsty, and they make you lick the blood off the steps of the guillotine !

( Violent agitation among the listeners, shouts of applause, many voices : “ Long live Danton, down with the Decemvirs ! ”—The prisoners are led out forcibly. )

SQUARE IN FRONT OF THE PALAIS DE JUSTICE

*A Crowd of People*

A FEW VOICES : Down with the Decemvirs ! Long live Danton !

1ST CITIZEN : Yes, that's true, heads instead of bread, blood instead of wine !

A FEW WOMEN : The guillotine is a bad mill and Samson is a bad baker's boy ; we want bread, bread !

2ND CITIZEN : Danton has eaten your bread. His head will give you all bread again, he was right.

1ST CITIZEN : Danton was among us on the 10th August, Danton was among us in September. Where were then the people who have accused him ?

2ND CITIZEN : And Lafayette was with you at Versailles, but still he was a traitor.

1ST CITIZEN : Who says Danton is a traitor ?

2ND CITIZEN : Robespierre.

1ST CITIZEN : Robespierre is a traitor !

2ND CITIZEN : Who says so ?

1ST CITIZEN : Danton.

2ND CITIZEN : Danton has fine clothes, Danton has a fine house, Danton has a beautiful wife, he bathes in Burgundy wine, eats venison off silver plates and sleeps with your wives and daughters when he is drunk.—Danton was poor like you. Where has he got all this from ? The king's veto

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bought it for him, so that he might save his crown. The duke of Orleans made him a present of it, so that he might steal the crown for him. The foreigner gave it to him, so that he might betray you all.—What has Robespierre ? The virtuous Robespierre ! You all know him.

ALL : Long live Robespierre ! Down with Danton !  
Down with the traitor !

HEINRICH HEINE

( 1797-1856 )



*What delighted Heinrich Heine's contemporaries and the later generations of the 19th century so much in Heine's early lyrics, that mixture of scented sentimentality and witty cynicism, strikes us as somewhat insipid today.—Nevertheless, as a poet too, he remains important : on the strength of his later elegiac and satirical poems which he wrote as a refugee in Paris, and which influenced German literature down to Frank Wedekind, and also as the poet of songs which were set to music by almost all great German song-composers. ( The singing of these songs is prohibited in Germany today, though they are among the most beautiful of German songs, because Heine was of Jewish descent. ) He is immortal, however, as a political journalist whose political foresight is wellnigh prophetic, and as the only really great German pamphleteer. He died as a refugee in Paris, and is buried there.*

## FROM "THE BOOK LE GRAND"

HEINE : " REISEBILDER ", 1826

( Translated by Francis Storr, 1887 )

THE town of Düsseldorf is very beautiful, and if you think of it when far away, and happen to have been born there, it affects you strangely. I was born there, and the very name sets me longing to go home. When I say *home*, I mean the Bolkerstrasse, and the house where I was born. This house will some day be famous, and I have told the old woman who owns it, as she values her life not to sell it. The whole house would hardly fetch as much now as the tips which green-veiled English ladies of quality will give to the house-keeper who shows them the room where I first saw the light, and the henhouse where my father used to lock me up for stealing grapes, and the barn-door on which my mother taught me to write my letters with chalk. Heavens ! Madame, if I turn out a famous writer it cost my poor mother trouble enough to make me one.

But at present my fame is still sleeping in the marble quarries of Carrara. The laurel wreath of scribbling paper with which they have crowned my brows has not yet spread its perfume over the universe, and when green-veiled English ladies visit Düsseldorf, they pass by the famous house and go straight to the market-place to look at the colossal black equestrian statue

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which stands in the middle of it. They tell us that the statue represents the Prince Elector Jan Wilhelm. He is clad in black armour, and has a long pigtail. As a boy, I was told that the artist who made the statue noticed to his horror during the casting that there was not metal enough, and so all the citizens came running with their silver spoons to make up the deficiency, and I used to stand before the statue for hours, calculating how many silver spoons it contained, and how many apple-tarts all this silver might have purchased. For apple-tarts were then my passion—now it is love, truth, freedom, and crayfish soup—and, as good luck would have it, close to the Elector's statue at the corner of the theatre there was generally stationed a comical-looking, bow-legged fellow, with a white apron and a basket of piping hot apple-tarts, which he cried in an irresistible falsetto voice : . “ Apple-tarts, straight from the oven, smelling delicious ! ” Indeed, when in riper years, the tempter tried to seduce me, he spoke with the same insinuating falsetto, and I should never have stayed twelve full hours in Signora Julietta's company, but that her voice was pitched in sweet, savoury, apple-tart key. And, indeed, apple-tarts would never have had such an attraction for me, had not bandy-legged Hermann covered them up so mysteriously with his white apron. But I was talking about the equestrian statue that has so many silver spoons inside him, and not a spoonful of soup—the state which represents the Elector Jan Wilhelm. By all accounts he must

have been a fine fellow, a great lover of art, and no mean artist himself. He founded the picture-gallery at Düsseldorf, and in the observatory they still show a most curious set of wooden goblets one fitting inside the other, which he carved in his leisure hours—and he had twenty-four leisure hours every day of his life.

In those days princes were not so plagued and pestered as they now are; their crowns grew firm on their heads, and at night they pulled a nightcap over head and crown, and slept peacefully. Their people slept peacefully at their feet, and on awaking in the morning they said, "Good morning, daddy!" and the prince answered, "Good morning, dear children."

But suddenly all this was changed. One morning when we awoke at Düsseldorf, and were going to say, "Good morning, daddy," we found our daddy had departed; the whole town was in a state of dull stupefaction and wore a funereal air, and the people stole silently to the market-place and read the long placard on the door of the Town Hall. The weather was rainy, and yet Kilian, the lean tailor, was standing in his nankeen jacket, which he generally kept for home wear, and his blue woollen stockings hung down and exposed his bare shrivelled shanks, and his thin lips quivered while he muttered to himself the placarded proclamation. An old pensioner of the army of the Palatinate read in a somewhat louder tone, and once and again as he read a bright tear dropped on his honest grizzled moustache. I stood by his side and wept; and asked him why we wept. He

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answered, "The Elector thanks you," and began reading again, and at the words "for your proved loyalty", and "releases you from your allegiance", his tears fell faster. It is a strange sight to see a veteran with faded uniform and scarred face suddenly burst into tears. While we were reading, the electoral arms were taken down from the Town Hall, and all assumed a dull leaden aspect, as if an eclipse were coming on. The town-councillors went about with a languid out-of-office sort of gait, even the magisterial town-beadle looked as if he had no more orders to give and stood calmly indifferent, though crazy Aloysius was at his old tricks again, standing like a stork on one leg and clattering out the names of the French generals with idiotic grimaces, whilst the drunken cripple Gumpertz rolled in the gutter singing, "Ca ira, ca ira!"

But I went home sobbing as if my heart would break, "The Elector thanks you." My mother had a hard time of it, I knew what I knew and refused to be comforted. I went to bed weeping, and that night I dreamt that the world was coming to an end; flower gardens and meadows were rolled up and put away like carpets; the town-beadle climbed up a high ladder and took down the sun; tailor Kilian looked on and said to himself, "I must go home and put on my best clothes, for I am dead and am to be buried this very day"—and it grew darker and darker; a few stray stars glimmered fitfully, and even these fell like yellow leaves in autumn; everyone had gradually disappeared, and I wandered about disconsolately, till at last I found myself by a row of

willows which bounded a desolate homestead, where was a man digging, and a hideous old shrew beside him, with something in her apron that looked like a severed head ; it was the moon, and she carefully laid it in the open trench--and behind me was the old pensioner sobbing, and spelling out, "The Elector thanks you."

When I awoke the sun was shining through my window as usual ; in the street drums were beating, and when I entered the parlour and bade my father "good morning" (he had on a white wrapper), I heard the volatile *friseur*, whilst operating with his curling irons, telling him *to a hair* every detail of the coronation that was to take place today at the Town Hall, that the new Archduke Joachim belonged to the best families and was married to the Emperor Napoléon's sister, and was himself a gentleman of royal presence and wore his black hair in lovely curls, and was shortly going to make his entry, and could not fail to please all the ladies. All this while the drumming in the streets never stopped, and I went to the front door and saw the French troops marching in, that light-hearted nation of *la gloire* that marched through the world with song and clatter, the calm stern faces of the grenadiers, the bearskin shakoes, the tricolour cockades, the gleaming bayonets, the *Voltigeurs*, all smiles and *point d'honneur*, and the omnipotent silver-laced drum-major, throwing his gold-knobbed baton as high as the first storey, and his eyes as far even as the second if there chanced to be pretty faces at the windows. I was delighted at the prospect of having soldiers billeted on us-

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my mother was not—and I hurried to the market-place. There everything was changed, as if all the world had been fresh painted. On the Town Hall there was a new coat-of-arms ; the iron railings of the balcony were hung with embroidered velvet ; French grenadiers were on guard ; the old town-councillors had changed their faces and wore their Sunday suits, and bowed to one another *à la françoise*, and said *bon jour* ; ladies were peering out of every window, gaping citizens and smart soldiers filled the great square, and boys, of whom I was one, clambered up the colossal horse of the Elector, and looked down on the motley mob in the market-place.

Our neighbour's boy Pitter and lanky Kunz nearly broke their necks on this occasion, though that would have been no misfortune ; for Pitter afterwards ran away from home, enlisted, deserted, and was shot at Mayence ; while Kunz subsequently went on voyages of discovery in other peoples' pockets, was elected for his services an active member of a public treadmill company, broke the fetters which bound him to the company and to his country, crossed the water in safety, and died in London from wearing a tight choker which tied of itself when a state official pulled the board on which he happened to be standing.

Lanky Kunz told us there was no school today on account of the coronation. We had a long time to wait for the show. At last the balcony of the Town Hall filled with gentlemen in uniform, flags, and trumpets, and the Burgomaster, in his famous red coat, made a

speech which extended indefinitely, like indiarubber or a knitted nightcap twirled round with a stone in it (not in this case the philosopher's stone); and a few sentences even I could catch, for instance, that they meant to make us all happy—and as he sat down the trumpets blew, the flags waved, the drums beat, and there were shouts of *Vivat!* and I too shouted *Vivat!* holding fast to the old Elector. I had need to hold on, for I was growing quite giddy, and beginning to think that the world was upside down and people standing on their heads, and the Elector seemed to wave his iron pigtail and whisper in my ear, “Hold fast to me,” and it was only the sound of the cannon being fired on the ramparts that brought me to my senses, and I slowly got down from the Elector's horse and made my way honie.

On my way I again saw crazy Aloysius hopping about on one leg and quacking out the names of the French generals, and the cripple Gurapertz rolling drunk in the gutter and roaring “*Ca ira, Ca ira;*” and I told my mother that they meant to make us all happy, and that's why there's no school today.

The next day the world had recovered its usual aspect, and school went on as usual with the old repetitions—the Roman kings, dates, nouns in—*im*, irregular verbs, Greek, Hebrew, geography, German, mental arithmetic—the very thought of it all makes my head swim—all had to be learnt by heart.

Latin! Madame, you have no idea of the intricacies of the Latin language. The Romans would certainly not

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have had time to spare for conquering the world if they had first had to learn Latin. Happy men ! they knew in their cradles what nouns formed their accusatives in—*im*. I had to learn them by heart in the sweat of my brow ; but after all it is a good thing that I know them. For if, on the 20th July, 1825, when I had to read my Latin thesis for a doctor's degree in the Senate-house at Göttingen—it would have been worth your while to be present, Madame—if on that occasion I had said *sinapem* instead of *sinapim*, it is possible that some of the freshmen present would have noticed it, and that would have been an indelible stigma. “ *Vis, buries, sitis, tussis, cucumis, amussis, cannabis, sinapis* ”—the reason that these words have made such a noise in the world is because they form a definite class and yet are exceptional. This is why I hold them in such respect, and the consciousness that they are always at hand if I should ever be called upon to use them affords me much inward peace and satisfaction in the darker hours of my life. But, Madame, the *verba irregularia*—the difference between them and the *verba regularia* is that they entail far more floggings—are frightfully difficult. In the dank cloisters of the Franciscan convent which were close to our schoolroom there used to hang a big crucifix of grey wood, a grim carving which even now at times haunts my dreams and stares at me mournfully with bleeding eyes—before this image I often stood and prayed. “ O thou poor Deity, once tortured like myself, if it be possible grant that I may remember the *verba irregularia* ! ” .

## *Germans beyond Germany*

Of Greek I cannot trust myself to speak. The monks of the Middle Ages were not altogether wrong when they pronounced Greek an invention of the devil. God knows the woes it caused me. With Hebrew I fared better, for I always had a strong liking for the Jews, though to this very hour they crucify my good name. But even in Hebrew I could not get on so well as my watch, which was on intimate terms with the pawnbrokers, and thus picked up much of the manners and customs of the Jews—for instance, not to go on a Saturday—and learnt the language of Holy Scripture, which it afterwards used quite grammatically. Often, as I lay awake, I was amazed to hear it ticking to itself, “Katal, katalta, katalti—kittel, kittalta, kittalti—pokat, pokadeti—pikat—pik—pik.” But I got far more German into my head, and even German, I can tell you, is not child’s play. For as if the quartering of soldiers upon us, military service, the poll tax, and the thousand other ills that German flesh is heir to, were not sufficient burden, we have saddled ourselves with an Adelung<sup>1</sup> and plague one another with accusatives and datives.—

Whilst rambling on in this strain and ruminating, I have unconsciously slipped into gossip about my old school-days, and I may as well avail myself of the occasion to convince you, Madame, that it was not my fault if I learnt so little geography at school, that in after life I failed to make my way in the world. The fact is, that when I was at school the French had upset all the

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<sup>1</sup> A famous old German manual.—ED.

### *Heinrich Heine*

boundaries ; every day some country was freshly illuminated ; the blue suddenly turned green, not a few turned actually blood-red ; the populations set down in our class-books got so mixed and muddled that no one could make head or tail of them ; in the products of the countries there was like confusion, chicory and beetroot now growing where before there was nothing but hares, and country squires hunting them ; in national characters there was a similar revolution, Germans becoming nimblewitted, Frenchmen refraining from compliments, Englishmen ceasing to scatter sovereigns broadcast,威尼斯人 failing in subtlety ; crowned heads got rapid promotion, the old kings got new uniforms, new kingdoms were put in the oven and sold off like hot rolls ; several monarchs, on the contrary, were turned out of house and home, and had to earn their bread as best they could, and some in consequence set to work betimes to learn a trade, made sealing-wax, or . . . Madame, I must cut short this period, if only for lack of breath—it all comes to this, that in times like these one can't get far in geography.

In natural history there are not the same drawbacks. The science is not liable to so many changes, and we have stereotyped plates of apes, kangaroos, zebras, rhinoceroses, etc. These engravings were firmly stamped on my memory, and this explains how in after life many people whom I met for the first time seemed to me like old acquaintances. . . . .

In mythology, too, I made good progress. I was de-

lighted with the merry rabble of gods who ruled the world in their free and easy nudity. No schoolboy in old Rome ever learnt by heart the chief article of his catechism, e. g. the amours of Venus, more perfectly than I. To be candid, I think that as we had to get by heart the old gods anyway, it would have been better to retain them, and perhaps we are not much better off with our Neo-Roman triadtry, or even with our Jewish monolatry. Perhaps, after all, the old mythology was not so immoral as it is made out to be ; for instance, Homer shows a delicate sense of propriety in giving a decent husband to such a quean as Venus.

But I got on best of all in Abbé d'Aulnoi's French class. The abbé was a French *émigré* who wrote a number of grammars and wore a red wig, and capered about when he was giving a lecture on his "*Art Poétique*" and his "*Histoire Allemande*." He was the only master in the school who taught German history. But French, too, has its difficulties, and before you acquire it you must have had many soldiers billeted on you, much drumming, much *apprendre par cœur*, and, above all, you must not be a *bête allemande*. In the French lesson there were many hard words. I remember, as if it were yesterday, the trouble into which I got over "*la religion*." Six times, at least, I was asked, " Henry, what is the French for "faith" and six times I answered, each time with a greater burst of tears, " *le crédit*. " And the seventh time my questioner, turning purple with rage, shouted, " It is *la religion*," and a rain of blows followed,

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and all my schoolfellows burst out laughing. Madame, since that day, I never hear the word *religion* without feeling a cold shiver down my back and my cheeks reddening with shame. And in honest truth I have found "*le crédit*" more useful to me through life than "*la religion*."—

*Parbleu*, Madame ! I have attained considerable proficiency in French. Not only do I understand *patois*, but even aristocratic nursery-governess French. Not long ago, at a fashionable party, I understood nearly half the discourse of two German countesses, each of whom could reckon more than sixty-four years and as many ancestors.—One must get to know the genius of the language, and that is best taught by drumming. *Parbleu* ! how much I owe the French *tambour* who was so long billeted on us, looked like a very devil, and yet was such an angelic character, and such an incomparable drummer.

- A little nervous figure, never still for an instant ; a fierce black moustache, beneath which the red lips curled defiantly ; fiery eyes which glanced hither and thither.
- With all a small boy's devotion I stuck to him like a burr, helped him to polish his buttons till they shone like mirrors, and to pipeclay his waistcoat, for Monsieur Le Grand was somewhat of a dandy, and I followed him, like a dog, on guard, to the roll-call, to parade—all, *then*, was glitter and gladness, *now*, *les jours de fête sont passés* ! Monsieur Le Grand only new a little broken German—only the indispensable phrases, "bread", "kiss", "honour"—but he could make himself perfectly under-

stood on the drum. For instance, when I did not know the meaning of *liberté*, he would beat the "Marseillaise", and I understood him. If I did not know what *égalité* meant, he played the march "*Ca ira, ca ira... les aristocrates à la lanterne*"! and I understood him. If I did not know the German for "*bêtise*", he beat the Dessau March, which we Germans, as even Goethe allows, beat in Champagne<sup>2</sup>, and I understood him. Once he wanted to explain to me the word "*Allemagne*", and he beat a very primitive simple measure which is often played at fairs for dogs to dance to, the tune of dum, dum, dum; I was angry, but still I understood him.

In the same way he taught me, also, modern history. I did not understand a word of what he said but as throughout his discourse he accompanied himself on the drum, I knew what he meant. This, after all, is the best method of teaching. The taking of the Bastille, of the Tuileries, etc. are never fully realised till one knows to what beat of the drum they were taken. In our history primers we read merely: "Their excellencies the barons and counts and their noble consorts were beheaded; their highnesses the dukes and princes and their very noble consorts were beheaded; his majesty the king and his most noble consort were beheaded," but when one hears the drums beating the bloody guillotine march one begins to realise the scene, and perceives the why and the wherefore. A truly

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<sup>2</sup> In the unsuccessful campaign against revolutionary France, in which Goethe took part as a spectator.—ED.

### *Heinrich Heine*

marvellous march, Madame ! When first I heard it, it thrilled me to the very marrow, and I was glad when I forgot it. One does forget such things as one grows older ; a young man has nowadays so much else to remember—whist, boston, genealogies, acts of Parliament, dramaturgy, liturgy, carving at table—and really I have for some years past been unable to recall that impressive tune, though I often racked my brains in the effort. But strange to say, Madame, I was dining the other day with a regular menagerie of counts, princes, princesses, chamberlains, ladies in waiting, court butlers, mistresses of the robes, keepers of the plate, mistresses of the chase, and the Lord knows how many other titled lacqueys of the court, and their under-lacqueys were waiting behind their chairs and filling up the plates as they guzzled, while I sat idly by unheeded and unserved, with nothing to occupy my jaws, making pills of bread-crumbs, and drumming on the table to while away the time—and to my horror I found myself suddenly drumming the bloody long-forgotten guillotine march !

“ And what happened ? ” Madame, these people never let themselves be put out when eating, and do not know that other people when they’ve nothing to eat take suddenly to drumming, and drum very curious marches, supposed to have been long forgotten.

Drumming may with me be an innate talent, or I may have acquired it at a very early age ; in either case, it runs in the blood, in my hands, in my feet, and it comes out often quite involuntarily. For instance, at

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Berlin I was once attending the classes of Privy Councillor Schmalz, I was attending a course of his lectures on the rights of nations, and one drowsy summer afternoon I sat there hearing less and less, my brain fast asleep, when suddenly I was awakened by the sound of my own feet, which had stayed awake and apparently heard the exact opposite of the rights of nations propounded, and Parliamentarism abused; and my feet—whose little œils-de-perdrix can observe the tendencies of the times far better than the professor's great Juno-eyes—my poor dumb feet, unable to articulate their modest dissent, tried to express themselves by drumming, and drummed so hard that they nearly got me into trouble. Devil take those giddy feet! They played me a like turn when I once dropped in at Professor Saalfeld's lecture at Göttingen. The professor was dancing about the platform with the agility of an elephant, and working himself into a passion for a set tirade against the Emperor Napoleon, when those accursed feet of mine—no, poor feet, I cannot blame you for drumming then, nay, I could not have blamed you had your dumb instinct thus outraged expressed itself in a yet more forcible fashion. How can I, a pupil of Le Grand, hear the Emperor abused? The Emperor! the great Emperor!

When I think of the great Emperor, in my mind's eye it is summer again, all gold and green. A long avenue of lime-trees in blossom rises up before me; on the leafy branches sit nightingales singing; the waterfall ripples; in

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the borders are flowers dreamily waving their fair heads.

Between me and the flowers there was a strange communion ; the painted tulips bowed to me with the pride that apes humility, the sickly lilies nodded to me with tender sensibility, the roses with wine-flushed cheeks laughed a welcome from afar, the night-stocks sighed—with myrtles and laurels I was not then acquainted, for they had no bright blossoms to attract me, but with mignonette (we have since quarrelled) I was then on the most intimate terms. I am speaking of the palace gardens at Düsseldorf, where I used to lie on the grass reverently listening to Monsieur Le Grand as he told me of the great Emperor's heroism, and beat the marches to which those heroic exploits were performed, so that my eyes and ears drank in the very life of it all. . I saw the march across the Simplon—the Emperor in front and the brave grenadiers climbing up behind, while the startled eagles screamed and the glaciers thundered in the distance ; I saw the Emperor clasping the standard on the bridge of Lodi ; I saw the Emperor in his grey cloak at Marengo ; I saw the Emperor on horseback at the battle of the Pyramids—nothing but smoke and Mamelukes—I saw the Emperor at Austerlitz—twang ! how the bullets whizzed over the smooth ice—I saw, I heard, the battle of Jena—dum, dum, dum—I saw, I heard, the battle of Eylau, of Wagram—no, I could hardly stand it ! Monsieur Le Grand drummed till my own eardrum was nearly cracked.

But what were my feelings when I saw him at last

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with my own eyes—O beatific vision!—himself, the Emperor.

It was in the *allée* of the same palace gardens at Düsseldorf. As I shouldered my way through the gaping crowd, I thought of the deeds and battles which Monsieur Le Grand had portrayed to me with his drum; my heart beat the grand march—and yet I thought at the same time of the police regulations which ordered that no one should ride through the *allée* under a penalty of five thalers. And the Emperor with his retinue rode right through the *allée*! The shuddering trees bowed down to him as he passed; the sunbeams peeped timidly through the green foliage; and in the blue heavens above there sailed in sight a golden star. He wore his plain green uniform, and his small world-famous cap. He rode a white palfrey, which stepped with such calm pride, such assurance and dignity—had I been the Crown Prince of Prussia, I should still have envied that pony. Carelessly, with a loose seat, the Emperor held up the reins in one hand, and with the other patted good-temperedly his horse's neck. It was a sunlit marble hand, a mighty hand, one of those two hands that had tamed the hydra of anarchy, and quelled the feud of nations; and now it patted good-temperedly his horse's neck. His face, too, was of the same hue that we see in marble busts of Greeks and Romans; the features wore the same expression of calm dignity that the ancients have, and on it was written, “Thou shalt have none other gods but me.” A smile that warmed and calmed every heart played

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about his lips, and yet we knew that those lips had only to whistle and—*la Prusse n'existait plus*; those lips had only to whistle, and clericalism died like an echo; those lips had only to whistle to set dancing the Holy Roman Empire. And now those lips smiled, and his eye smiled—an eye clear as heaven, an eye that read men's hearts, an eye that at a glance embraced all earthly things, while we mortals see them only one by one, and only the painted shadows. The brow was not so clear; it was haunted by the ghosts of coming battles, and at times a frown passed across it; these frowns were the creative thoughts, seven-league-boot thoughts, with which the Emperor's mind strode invisible over the world—and I fancy each of these thoughts would have furnished a German writer with materials to employ his whole life.

The Emperor rode calmly down the *allée*; no policeman stopped his way; behind him, on snorting chargers, bedizened with gold and jewels, rode his retinue; the drums beat, the trumpets blared; at my side mad Aloysius spun round and round, and clattered out the names of his generals; close by drunken Gumpertz bellowed, and the people shouted with a thousand voices, “Long live the Emperor!”

The Emperor is dead. On a desolate island in the Atlantic is his lonely grave, and he for whom the earth was all too narrow rests peacefully beneath the hillock where five weeping willows droop their green tresses in agonised despair, and a tender-hearted rivulet ripples by with melancholy plaint. There is no inscription on the

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tombstone, but Clio has graven thereon, in invisible letters, her just sentence that will echo through the centuries like spirit voices.<sup>3</sup>

To the end of all time the boys of France will sing—but a day will come when this song will be wafted across the sea—St. Helena is the Holy Sepulchre to which the peoples of the East and of the West make pilgrimages in gaily pennoned barks, and comfort their hearts with the great memories of the saviour of the world who suffered under Hudson Lowe, as it is written in the gospels of Las Casas, of O'Meara, and of Autommarchi.

Strange, the three greatest adversaries of the Emperor have already found an awful fate. Londonderry cut his throat; Louis XVIII rotted on his throne; and Professor Saalfeld is still professor at Göttingen.

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One clear frosty autumn morning, a young man, who seemed from his appearance a student, was walking slowly through the *allée* of the palace gardens at Düsseldorf. Now and again, as if in childish wantonness, he kicked the rustling leaves which strewed the ground, but as often he gazed up sorrowfully at the bare trees on which a few golden leaves were still left hanging. As he thus gazed upwards he thought on the words of Glaucus:<sup>4</sup>

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3 Then come violent attacks on Britain for having allowed Napoleon to die in St. Helena.—ED.

4 "Iliad" VI, 146-149.—ED.

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"As are the leaves of the forest, e'en so are the races of mortals.

Leaves that are scattered to earth by the blasts of winter, but others

Bud and burgeon anew when spring re-clothes the forest ;  
So are the races of men ; one grows as the other decayeth."

In earlier days the young man had gazed up at these self-same trees with far other thoughts. Then he was a boy looking for birds'-nests, or for cockchafers which enchanted him when they buzzed merrily past, rejoicing in this fair world, and contented with a sappy green leaf, with a drop of dew, with a warm sunbeam, and with the sweet scent of plants. Then the boy's heart was as joyous as the creatures that flitted round him. But now his heart had grown older, the faint rays of sunlight had died, all the flowers had faded, even the fair dream of love had vanished, and in his poor heart was nothing but rage and bitterness ; and, saddest of all, that heart was my heart.

On that day I had returned to my old native town, but I did not mean to spend the night there, and was longing to reach Godesberg, in order to sit at the feet of my lady friend and talk to her of the little Veronica. I had visited the graves of my dear ones. Of all my friends and relations I had found living only one uncle and one aunt. A few known faces I met in the streets, but no one knew me, and the town itself looked on me as a stranger ; many of the houses had been freshly

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painted since I saw them ; strange faces appeared at the windows ; decrepit sparrows fluttered round the old chimneys ; everything had a look of life in death, like green herbs growing in a churchyard ; where French was once spoken, they now spoke Prussian, and a small Prussian court had actually established itself in my absence ; court titles had become common ; my mother's coiffeuse had been made coiffeuse to the court, and there were court tailors, court shoemakers, court lady-bug-exterminators, court gin palaces—the whole town seemed one court lazaretto for court lunatics.

Only the old Elector recognised me ; he still stood in the old market-place, but seemed to have grown thinner. Standing always in the middle of the market-place he had witnessed all the *misère* of the times, and on such sights one does not grow fat. I seemed in a dream, and thought of the legend of enchanted cities, and hurried out of the gates in order not to awake too early. In the palace gardens I missed many a tree and many were mere wrecks ; the four great poplars which once appeared to me like green giants had dwindled to dwarfs. Some pretty girls were walking about in gay dresses like moving tulips ; and these tulips I had known when they were still in the bulb. Ah me ! they were neighbours' children with whom I had once played at Tom Tiddler's ground. But the fair maidens whom I had once known as blooming roses now appeared as faded roses, and across many a high forehead whose pride had once charmed me the scythe of Saturn had traced deep wrinkles. Then first,

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too late, alas ! I discovered what that look meant which they once cast on the boy already half a man ; light had since been thrown on their meaning by many parallel passages observed in other fair eyes. It moved me deeply to see a man humbly taking off his hat to me ; I remembered him as a rich man of rank, and now he had sunk to beggary—an instance of the common observation that when once a man begins to go downhill, he goes to ruin with ever increasing velocity, as if by the law of gravitation. The one man who seemed to me absolutely unchanged was the little Baron who was tripping gaily through the palace gardens, just as he used to trip, holding up his left coat-tail with one hand, and swinging his dainty cane with the other. It was the same good-natured little face, its ruddy hues concentrated, as it were, in the nose ; the same old conical hat, the same old pigtail, only from beneath it, instead of the black locks of old days, there peeped a few white hairs. But, in spite of his sprightly air, I knew that the poor Baron had seen no little trouble. His face would fain have hidden it from me, but the white hairs of his pigtail betrayed the secret behind his back ; and the pigtail itself would fain have given them the lie, and wagged with a most tragical liveliness.

I was not tired, but the fancy seized me to sit once more on the wooden bench whereon I had once cut the name of my sweet-heart. I had difficulty in finding the name, so many new ones had been carved over it. Ah me ! I had once fallen asleep on this bench, and dreamt

of happiness and love. "Dreams are but 'gleams'". My old childish games, too, came back to me, and the old delightful fairy-stories of my childhood, but all the while there was uppermost in my mind the later memory of an unfair game, of a hideous fairy-tale—the story of two poor souls who proved faithless to each other, and then went on from worse to worse in faithlessness till they broke faith with God himself. 'Tis a miserable story, and if one happens to have nothing better to do, one might weep over it. O God! once the world was so fair, and the birds sang Thy everlasting praises, and the little Veronica gazed at me with her quiet eyes, and we sat before the marble statue on the Castle Square. On one side of it is the old ruined castle which is haunted by a headless lady in a black silk dress with a long rustling train; on the other side is a high, white building, the upper chambers bright with gay pictures in golden frames; on the ground floor thousands of huge tomes, which the little Veronica and I so often marvelled at when the good Ursula lifted us up to peep in at the big windows. Later on, when I had grown a big boy, I used to climb everyday the tallest steps in that library and get down the tallest books, and read so deeply that I was afraid of nothing, least of all of headless ladies, and got so clever that I forgot all the old games and stories and pictures and the little Veronica, and even her name.

But as I was sitting on the old bench in the palace gardens, letting my thoughts wander back to past

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times, I heard behind me a confused sound of voices, laments for the fate of the poor French prisoners in the Russian war who had been carried off to Siberia, kept there for years in spite of the peace, and were only now on their way home. Looking up I actually beheld before me these orphans of *la gloire*. Bare misery peeped out through their torn and tattered uniforms; hollow eyes looked forth from weather-beaten faces; and, though crippled, careworn, and mostly limping, they still managed to keep a sort of military step, and, strange to say, a drummer with his drum staggered on in front of them. With a cold shudder I thought of the legend of the soldiers who fall on the day of battle and at night rise from the battlefield, and with the drummer at their head, march back to their native town, as the old ballad tells:

Rataplan ! rataplan ! he beat his drum ;

Home from the bivouac they come ;

Down the bright street they pour.

Tralleri, trallerei, trallera !

Halt at the sweetheart's door.

The morrow grinning skulls and bones

Stand rank and file like churchyard stones,

And at their head the drum.

Tralleri, trallerei, trallera !

That she may see him come.

Actually the poor French drummer seemed to have risen from the grave, half-decomposed—a mere shadow in a soiled and tattered grey capote, a corpse-like clayey

face, with a heavy moustache which hung down over livid lips, eyes like burnt-out tinder with a few sparks left in it, and yet by the glimmer of one of these sparks I recognised Monsieur Le Grand.

He, too, recognised me, and pulled me down on to the grass, and there we sat, as in days gone by, when I attended his courses of French and Modern History on his drum. It was the same well-known old drum, and I kept wondering to myself how he could have preserved it from Russian greed. He drummed just as he used, but without speaking. But if his lips were forbiddingly compressed, his eyes were all the more eloquent, and flashed triumphantly as he played the old marches. The poplars near us shivered as he again beat out the red guillotine march. The old wars of independence, the old battles, the victories of the Emperor, all these he beat as before, and it seemed as if the drum itself were a living creature delighted to express its sense of joy. Again I heard the thunder of the cannon, the whizz of the bullets, the din of battle ; again I saw the death-courage of the Guards ; again I saw the streaming pennons ; again I saw the Emperor on horseback—but gradually a minor tone of sadness crept into these sounds of revelry ; with jubilant pæans the drum sent forth a strangely-mingled wail ; it seemed at once a song of triumph and a funeral march. Le Grand's eyes dilated in ghostly wise, and I saw in them nothing but a wide, white ice-field, strewn with corpses—it was the battlefield of the Moskwa.

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I should never have thought that the old shrivelled drum could have emitted such heartrending sounds as Monsieur Le Grand now drew forth. Its beats were tears ; they grew fainter and fainter, and like a mournful echo deep sighs came from Le Grand's breast. And he grew weaker and more ghostlike, his shrunken hands shivered with cold ; he sat as in a dream, beating the air with his drumsticks and listening, as it seemed, to distant voices. At last he gazed on me with a deep, cavernous, beseeching look (I understood it), and then his head sank down upon his drum.

Monsieur Le Grand never drummed again in this life. His drum, too, has never given forth another note ; it was not made to be a slave, and sound the tattoo for any foe to freedom. I understood right well Le Grand's dying look ; I drew the sword from my stick and pierced the drum.

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*. Du sublime au ridicule il n'y a qu'un pas, Madame !*  
Aye, and life is at bottom so awfully serious that none of us could endure it without this blending of pathos and comedy. Our poets knew this well. The ghastliest portraits of human frenzy are revealed by Aristophanes, but they flash upon us from the mirror of his wit. The aching void of the thinker who feels his own nothingness Goethe dared not utter except in the doggerel rhymes of a puppet play, and the most woful wail over the world's misery is put by Shakespeare in the mouth of a fool jingling sadly all the while the bells of his coxcomb.

They have all caught the trick from the Arch-Poet himself, who in this thousand-act tragedy ( which we call Life ), carries humour to the highest point, as we see every day, Exeunt the heroes, enter the clowns and harlequins with their baubles and swords of lath. After the bloody revolution-scenes and imperial acts, come waddling on the stage again the fat Bourbons, with their stale old gags and their thin legitimist *bons-mots*, and the *ancienne noblesse* trip forward with dainty steps and hungry smiles, while a troop of saintly cowls with tapers and crosses and church banners bring up the rear. And even at the climax of this world-tragedy some comic touch will slip in. The desperate republican who, like Brutus, plunges the knife into his breast has, it may be, first sniffed at the blade for fear that it has served to split a herring. And on this all-the-world stage things go on much as they do on our paltry boards. There, too, are drunken heroes, kings who do not know their parts, scenery which sticks fast, prompters' voices overheard, dancers who draw down the house with the poetry of legs, costumes which make the play. And up in Heaven the little cherubs in the dress circle are all the while eyeing through their opera glasses our comedians below, and God Almighty is sitting solemnly in His state-box, bored with the performance, or possibly calculating that the company can't last, for one is paid too much, and another too little, and all act vilely.

*Du sublime au ridicule il n'y a qu'un pas, Madame !*  
As I was finishing the last chapter, and relating the death

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of Monsieur Le Grand, and my conscientious execution of the *testamentum militare* written in his dying looks, there was a knock at my study door, and in walked a poor old woman, who gently asked me if I were a doctor. I told her that I was, and she then requested me in the same gentle voice to accompany her home and perform an operation on her husband's corns.

## FRENCH AFFAIRS

( From Heine : Preface to " Französische Zustände " )

When we shall have reached that stage, when the great mass of the people really understand the present, they will no longer allow themselves to be goaded by writers in the pay of the aristocracy to hatred and war ; the great confederation of races, the Holy Alliance of nations, will be formed ; we shall no longer need, out of mutual mistrust, to feed standing armies of many hundred thousand murderer ; we shall use their swords and horses for ploughs, and so attain to peace, prosperity and freedom.

My life is dedicated to this active duty—it is my office. The hatred of my enemies may serve as a pledge that hitherto I have fulfilled this duty truly and honourably. I shall ever show myself worthy of that hatred. My enemies will never misunderstand me, even though my friends, in the delirium of excited passion, may mistake my deliberate calmness for lukewarm feeling.

Never has a nation been more cruelly abused by its rulers than the German.—A handful of nobles, who have learned nothing beyond double-dealing, card-sharping, drinking tricks, and similar stupid rascal accomplishments, with which, at the utmost; only peasants at fairs can be duped—such men think they can cheat an entire nation—a nation which invented gunpowder, and printing

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and the "Critique of Pure Reason."<sup>1</sup> This undeserved affront, that you regard us as more stupid than yourselves, and fancy that you can deceive us—that is the most serious insult which you have put upon us in the presence of surrounding peoples.—

I do not wish to accuse the constitutional German princes. I know the difficulties of their situation; I know that they pine in the fetters of their petty canarillas, and are not responsible. Then, too, they have been tampered with and enticed and compelled in every manner by Austria and Prussia. Let us not blame them, but pity them.

We may indeed war with Austria<sup>2</sup> daringly unto death, with sword in hand, but we feel in our inmost heart that we are not justified in reviling this Power in abusive terms. Austria was ever an open, honourable enemy, which never denied, nor did it for a moment suspend its attack on Liberalism. Metternich never cast amorous glances at the Goddess of Liberty; he never played the pietist, nor did he ever weep with the prisoners of the fortresses while he kept them fast chained. One always knew how one stood with him, knew that he was to be guarded against, and so one took precautions accordingly. He was always a sure man, who neither deceived us by gracious looks nor

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<sup>1</sup> The principal work of Immanuel Kant.

<sup>2</sup> At this time, under the chancellorship of Metternich, Austria held absolute sway over the reactionary petty German states, assisted by Prussia.—ED.

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enraged us by private malice. We knew that he was inspired neither by love nor petty hatred, but acted magnanimously in the spirit of a system to which Austria had been true for three centuries. It is the same system which induced Austria to oppose the Reformation, the same for which it battled with the Revolution. For this system not only the men, but also the daughters of the House of Habsburg fought. For the system the Habsburg princess Marie Antoinette waged war desperately in the Tuileries, and to maintain it the Habsburg Archduchess Marie Louise, who, as declared Regent of the Napoleonic Empire, ought to have combated for husband and child, in the same Tuileries abandoned the strife and laid down her arms;<sup>3</sup> for the preservation of this system the Emperor Franz suppressed his deepest feelings, and suffered unspeakable agonies of heart; just now he wears mourning for the beloved, blooming grandson whom he sacrificed to that system. This new grief deeply bowed the grey head which once bore the German Imperial crown; this poor Emperor is still the true representative of unfortunate Germany!

As to Prussia, we may speak of it in a very different tone. Here at least we are restrained by no regard or respect for the sacredness of an Imperial German

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<sup>3</sup> After the defeat at Waterloo of her husband, Napoleon, whom she did not follow into exile. Her son by Napoleon, i. e. the grandson of the Austrian Emperor Franz, died in Austria as a young man.—ED.

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head. The learned menials on the banks of the Spree may dream of a great Emperor of the realm of Borussia, and proclaim the hegemony and protecting lordliness of Prussia. But so far the long fingers of the Hohenzollern have not succeeded in grasping the crown of Charlemagne, and putting it in the same sack with so many other stolen Polish and Saxon jewels. As yet the crown of Charlemagne hangs far too high, and I doubt much whether it will ever descend to the witty head of that golden-spurred prince whom his barons even now already hail and offer homage to as the future restorer of chivalry.<sup>4</sup> I much rather believe that His Royal Highness will prove to be, instead of a successor to Charlemagne, only a follower of Charles X.<sup>5</sup>

It is true that even recently many friends of the Fatherland have desired the extension of Prussia, and hoped to see in its kings the masters of a united Germany. They have baited and allured patriotism to it; there was a Prussian Liberalism, and the friends of freedom already looked confidently towards the boulevard of Berlin. For my own part, I have never shared this confidence. I watched with anxiety this Prussian eagle, and, while others boasted that he looked so boldly at the sun, I was all the more observant of his claws. I did not trust this Prussian, this tall, canting pipeclay hero with his big belly,

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<sup>4</sup> Later King Friedrich Wilhelm IV, whose brother, later Wilhelm I, actually placed the German Imperial crown on his head at Versailles, after the Franco-German war of 1870-71.—ED.

<sup>5</sup> The French king who was dethroned in 1830 and fled. Friedrich Wilhelm IV died mentally deranged.—ED.

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broad mouth, and corporal's cane, which he first dipped in holy water before he laid it on. I disliked this philosophical Christian military despotism, this conglomerate of beer, lies and sand. Repulsive, deeply repulsive, to me was this Prussia, this stiff, hypocritical Prussia, this *Tartuffe* among states.

At last, when Warsaw fell, there fell also the soft and pious cloak in which Prussia had so well wrapped itself, and then even the most purblind saw the iron armour of despotism which was hidden under it. It was to the misfortune of Poland that Germany owed this salutary disillusionment.

Poland ! The blood boils in my veins when I write the word, when I reflect how Prussia behaved to these noblest children of adversity, and how cowardly, how vulgar, how treacherous was her conduct. From deepest disgust, words will fail the historian ; those shameful deeds will be written by an executioner.... I hear the red iron already hissing on the lean back of Prussia.

Oh this Prussia ! How well it understands how to take the utmost advantage of its people—it even takes advantage of its revolutionists ! For its political comedies it employs assistants of every colour. It even makes use of zebras with tricoloured stripes. So it has of late years set on its most fiery democrats to preach everywhere that all Germany must become Prussian. Hegel had to justify the permanence of servitude as reasonable, and Schleiermacher was compelled to protest against freedom, and commend Christian submission to the will of state

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authority.<sup>6</sup> Disgusting and infamous is this using of philosophers and theologians to influence the people, thus compelling them, by treason to God and reason, publicly to dishonour themselves. How many a fair name, how much admirable talent, is thereby degraded for the most worthless aims !

Oh, I know them, these Jesuits of the North ! He who has ever, be it from dire need or from lightmindedness, accepted the least thing from them is thereby lost for ever. Even as hell kept Proserpine because she had eaten there a single seed of a pomegranate, so those Jesuits never again release anyone who has in the least profited by them, be it only a single seed of the golden apple, or, to speak more prosaically, a single ducat.

Poor German people ! It was while you were resting from fighting for your princes, and were burying your brothers who had fallen in that fight, or were binding up your faithful wounds, smiling to see the blood running from your true hearts so full of joy and confidence--of joy that your beloved princes were saved, and of confidence in the humanely holy feeling of gratitude—even then in Vienna they were forging the federal act in the old workshop of the aristocracy.

Strange ! Even the prince who owed the most gratitude to his people, and who consequently promised

<sup>6</sup> The philosopher Hegel began his career as an ardent admirer of the French Revolution and ended as the official State philosopher of reactionary Prussia. Somewhat similar was the development of the theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher.—ED.

that people a representative constitution, a popular constitution such as other free peoples possess ; and who in that time of need promised it in black and white with the most positive words ; this very prince has now been crafty enough to induce to falsehood and breach of faith the other German princes, who also promised their subjects a free constitution, and he now supports himself on the Vienna federal act to destroy the newly blown German constitutions ; he who should not dare to utter the word “ Constitution ” without blushing !

I speak of His Majesty Friedrich Wilhelm, third of the name, King of Prussia.<sup>7</sup>

Having always had, as I shall always have, a liking for royalty, it is repugnant to my principles and feelings to criticise too severely princes as individuals. My inclinations are rather to praise them for their good qualities. Friedrich Wilhelm III is good and brave. He has shown himself steadfast in adversity, and, what is far rarer, gentle in prosperity. He is of chaste heart, of touchingly modest manner, with citizen-like simplicity, of good domestic manners, a tender father, especially so towards the beautiful Zarewna, to which tenderness we owe perhaps the cholera, and a still greater evil with which our descendants will do battle, and be duly grateful. Moreover, the King of Prussia is a very religious man ; he holds strongly to religion ; he is a good Christian,

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<sup>7</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm III, King of Prussia, had, in his invocation to his subjects to the war against Napoleon in 1813, promised a constitution, and then broke this promise.—ED.

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firmly attached to the evangelical confession of faith ; he has even himself written a liturgy ; he believes in the symbols—ah ! I wish he believed in Jupiter, the father of the gods, who punishes perjury, and that he would at last give us the promised constitution.

Or is not the word of a king as holy as an oath ?—

I know well enough that literary hirelings maintain that the King of Prussia promised this constitution of his own accord and free will, which promise is quite independent of all circumstances of the time. Fools ! Without soul and without feeling as they are, do they not know that men when we keep from them that which is theirs by legal right, are much less offended than when we refuse to give them what has been promised out of pure love, for in this latter case our vanity is wounded by feeling that he who voluntarily offered something no longer cares for us as much as before.

Or was it really a mere personal whim, quite independent of all temporal circumstances, which induced the King of Prussia to promise his people a free constitution ? In that case he had not even the intention to be grateful ? and yet there was very great reason why he should have been, for never before did any prince find himself in such lamentable case as that into which the King of Prussia had fallen after the battle of Jena, and from which he was rescued by his people. Had it not been for the consolations of religion, the insolence with which he was treated by the Emperor Napoleon must have brought him to despair. But, as I said, he found

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support in Christianity, which is truly the best religion after a lost battle. He was strengthened by the example of his Saviour ; for he too could say, “ My kingdom is not of this world ! ” and he forgave his enemies, who had occupied all Prussia with four hundred thousand men.

If Napoleon had not then been occupied with far more important matters than thinking of His Majesty Friedrich Wilhelm III, he would certainly have pensioned him off. Later, when all the kings of Europe united in a rabble of conspiracy against Napoleon, and the Emperor of the French people succumbed to this *émeute* of princes, and the Prussian donkey gave the dying lion the final kick, he regretted too late the sin of omission. When he paced up and down in his wooden cage of St. Helena, and remembered that he had cajoled the Pope and forgotten to crush Prussia, then he gnashed his teeth, and if a rat then came in his way, he stamped upon and killed the poor rat.

Now Napoleon is dead and lies well closed in his leaden coffin under the sands of Longwood on the island of St. Helena. All around him is the sea. You need fear him no more. Nor need you fear the last three gods who yet remain in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; for you are no good terms with their holy retinue. You have nothing to fear, for you are powerful and wise. You have gold and muskets, and all that is for sale you can buy, and what is mortal you can kill. Your wisdom is equally irresistible. Each

one of you is a Solomon, and it is a pity that the Queen of Sheba, that beautiful woman, no longer lives, for you would have unriddled her to her very chemise. And you have iron pots in which you can enclose those who give you anything to guess which does not appeal to you, and you can seal them up and cast them into the sea of oblivion—all like King Solomon. Like him, too, you understand the language of the birds; you know all that is chirped and piped in the land ; and if the song of any bird displeases you, you have a great pair of shears wherewith to clip his bill.—

But I bid you beware of one thing—the “ Moniteur ” of 1793.<sup>8</sup> That is a magic formula, and there are words of magic therein which you cannot bind—words which are mightier than gold and muskets—words with which the dead can be summoned from their graves, and the living sent to join the dead—words with which dwarfs may be raised to giants and giants overwhelmed—words which can fell all your power as the guillotine decapitates a king.

I shall confess the truth. There are people who are brave enough to utter those words, and who would never have been appalled by the most terrible apparitions ; but they knew not where to find the right spell in that book, nor could they have pronounced it with their thick lips, for they are not magicians. There are others who are indeed familiar with the mysterious divining-rod, who know where to find the magic word,

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\* The official newspaper of the great French Revolution.—ED.

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and even to utter it with tongues skilled in sorcery. But these were timid and feared the spectres whom they were to evoke ; for alas ! we do not know the spell with which to lay the spirits when the ghostly scene becomes too terrible ; we know not how to ban the inspired broom-stick back into its wooded repose when the house has once been inundated with blood ; we know not how to conjure down the fire when its raging tongues are licking everywhere. We were afraid !

But do not rely on our weakness and fear. The disguised man of the time, who would be bold of heart as ready with his tongue, and who knows the great word and has to utter it, is perhaps even now near you. It may be that he is masked in servile livery, or even in a harlequin's dress, and you do not forbode that he who, perhaps, servilely draws off your boots, or who causes you side-splitting laughter with his jokes, is to be your destroyer. Do you not often feel a strange shudder when these servile forms fawn round you with an almost ironic humility, and it suddenly occurs to you : " This is perhaps a snare, and this wretch, whose behaviour is so idiotically slavish, is perhaps a secret Brutus "? Have you not sometimes by night dreams which warn you against the smallest winding worms which you have perchance seen crawling in the daytime ? Be not afraid ! I do but jest, and you are quite safe.—The great fool will protect you from the petty fellows. The great fool is a very great fool, gigantic, and his name is—the German nation.

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Oh, a very great fool, in faith ! Instead of hawks'-bells, mighty church-bells weighing tons hang upon his cap, and he bears in his hand a colossal iron rattle. His heart is full of pain, but he will not think upon his griefs, for which reason he plays all the more merry pranks, and laughs to keep from weeping. When his sufferings come too bitterly to mind, then he shakes his head as if mad, and deafens himself with the pious Christian chiming of his cap. But if a good friend comes to him who would speak sympathetically of his pains, or even give him some domestic remedy against them, he goes raving mad and strikes at him with his iron rattle. He is particularly enraged at anyone who means well by him. He is the bitterest foe to his friends and the best friend to his enemies. And yet I bear the poor fool no grudge ; I love him and weep for him at a safe distance. You, whom the fool regards as his gracious masters, you need not fear him, as long as he remains sensible in his own way. Oh, the great fool will always remain faithful and submissive ; he will always amuse your knightlings with his giant tricks ; he will every day repeat his old feats of dexterity, and balance countless burdens on his nose, and let many hundreds of thousands of soldiers trample over his belly. But do you not fear lest the load become all at once too heavy, and that he will shake off your soldiers, and, in jest by the way, squeeze your head so with his little finger that your brains will spurt out up to the stars ?

But have no fear ; I do but jest. The great fool

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will remain most submissively obedient to you, and if the little fools would injure you, the great one would strike them dead.

*Written in Paris, 18th October, 1832*

HEINRICH HEINE

## GERMAN PHILOSOPHY AND GERMAN REVOLUTION

From Heine : "Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland", 1834  
(translated by Snodgrass 1882 )

It is Ballanche, I think, who says that it is a law of nature that initiators die as soon as they have completed the work of initiation. Alas ! worthy Ballanche, that is only part of the truth, and I might with more reason assert that, when the work of initiation is complete, the initiator dies--or becomes apostate.—

Such an explanation as the foregoing may enable us to understand certain other more terrible phenomena of our day which deeply afflict us. It may enable us to comprehend why men who have sacrificed everything for their opinion, who have fought and suffered for that opinion, should, after the victory is gained, abandon it and pass over into the enemy's camp ! I may be permitted also, after such an explanation, to draw attention to the fact that not Joseph Schelling only, but, in some sort, both Kant and Fichte, may likewise be accused of defection. Fichte died opportunely enough before his desertion of his own philosophy had time to become very notorious ; but Kant is unfaithful to the "Critique of Pure Reason", even whilst writing the "Critique of Practical Reason." The initiator dies or becomes apostate !

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I know not how it comes that this last sentence affects my soul with such a melancholy influence that I do not feel sufficient strength here to record the other bitter truths regarding the present Herr Schelling. Let us rather say something in praise of that dear former Schelling, whose memory blossoms perennially in the annals of German thought; for the former Schelling, like Kant and Fichte, represents one of the great phases of our philosophical revolution, compared by me in these pages to the political revolution in France. In truth, while in Kant we see the terrorist Convention Nationale and in Fichte the Napoleonic Empire, in Schelling we behold the reaction of the Restoration which followed the Empire. But it was at first a restoration in a better sense. Schelling re-established nature in its legitimate rights; he aimed at a reconciliation between mind and nature; he sought to reunite them in the eternal soul of the world. He restored that great philosophy of nature which we find in the old Greek philosophers, which Socrates first drew into closer relation with the human spirit, and which thereafter flowed forth again as the ideal. He restored that great philosophy of nature which, after unobtrusively budding out of the old pantheistic religion of the Germans, displayed during the age of Paracelsus its fairest flowers, but was stifled by the introduction of Cartesianism. Alas! he ended by restoring things whereby he may in the worst sense be compared with the French Restoration. • But public reason did not long

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endure such things ; he was ignominiously driven from the throne of thought. Hegel, his major-domo, carried off his crown and shaved his head, and since then the deposed Schelling has lived as a poor shaveling in Munich, a city that preserves in its very name its monkish character, and in Latin is called *Monacho monachorum*. There I saw him, with his large pale eyes and depressed, stupefied countenance, moving about irresolutely like a spectre, a miserable picture of fallen splendour. Hegel, however, had himself crowned at Berlin, unfortunately with some slight ceremony of anointing, and he has ever since held sway over German philosophy.

Our philosophical revolution is concluded ; Hegel has closed its great circle. Henceforth we see only the developing and perfecting of the philosophy of nature. This philosophy has, as I have already said, forced its way into all sciences, and has produced the most extraordinary and the most grandiose results. Much that is distressing, as I have also indicated, has of necessity come to light.—

Alas ! the philosophy of nature, which in many regions of knowledge, especially in the natural sciences strictly so called, produced the most splendid fruits, would elsewhere have brought forth the most obnoxious weeds. Whilst Oken, one of the most highly gifted thinkers, and one of the greatest citizens of Germany, was discovering his new worlds of ideas, and was inspiring the youth of Germany with enthusiasm for the imprescriptible rights of humanity, for freedom and equality,—alas ! at that

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very time Adam Müller was lecturing on the stall-feeding of nations according to the principles of natural philosophy; at that very time Herr Görres was preaching the obscurantism of the Middle Ages from the point of view of physical science, and was declaring the state to be only a tree which ought also to have in its organic distribution a stem, branches, and leaves, all as may be beautifully seen in the hierarchic corporations of the Middle Ages; at that very time Herr Steffens was proclaiming the law of philosophy in virtue of which the peasantry is distinguished from the nobility, the peasant being by nature destined to labour without enjoying, whereas the noble is entitled to enjoy without labouring; yea, only a few months since, as I am told, a dolt of a country squire in Westphalia, an arrant blockhead, bearing, I believe, the cognomen Haxthausen, published a pamphlet wherein he solicited the Government of the King of Prussia to have regard to the consistent parallel demonstrated by philosophy as existing in the organisation of the world, and to mark more strictly political distinctions; for as in nature there are four elements; fire, air, earth, and water, so in society there are four analogous elements, the nobility, the clergy, the burgesses, and the peasants.

When such melancholy follies were seen to spring from the tree of philosophy and to expand into poisonous flowers, when in particular it was observed that young Germany, absorbed in metaphysical abstractions, was oblivious to the most urgent questions of the time and

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had become unfit for practical life, well might patriots and friends of liberty feel a righteous indignation against philosophy, whilst some of them went the length of utterly condemning it as a vain and profitless pursuit of shadows.

We shall not commit the folly of seriously confuting these malcontents. German philosophy is an important fact ; it concerns the whole human race, and only our latest descendants will be in a position to decide whether we are to be praised or blamed for having first worked out our philosophy and afterwards our revolution. It seems to me that a methodical people, such as we are, must begin with the reformation, must then occupy itself with systems of philosophy, and that only after their completion could it pass to the political revolution. I find this sequence quite rational. The heads that have first served for the speculations of philosophy can afterwards be struck off by the revolution ; but, philosophy would not have been able to utilise the heads struck off by a revolution that preceded it. Give yourselves no anxiety however, you German Republicans ; the German revolution will not prove any milder or gentler because it was preceded by the philosophy of Kant, of Fichte, or even by the Philosophy of Nature. These doctrines served to develop revolutionary forces that only await their time to break forth and to fill the world with terror and with admiration. Then will appear Kantians as little tolerant of piety in the world of deeds as in the world of ideas, who will mercilessly

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upturn with sword and axe the soil of our European life in order to extirpate the last remnants of the past. There will come upon the scene armed Fichtleans whose fanaticism of will is to be restrained neither by fear nor by self-interest ; for they live in the spirit ; they defy matter like those early Christians who could be subdued neither by bodily torments nor by bodily delights. Yea, in a time of social revolution these transcendental idealists will prove even more pertinacious than the early Christians ; for the latter endured earthly martyrdom in the hope of attaining celestial blessedness, whilst the transcendental idealist looks on martyrdom itself as a vain show, and is invulnerable within the intrenchment of his own thought. But most of all to be feared would be the philosophers of nature were they actively to mingle in a German revolution, and to identify themselves with the work of destruction. For if the hand of the Kantian strikes with strong unerring blow, his heart being stirred by no feeling of traditional awe ; if the Fichtean courageously defies every danger, since for him danger has in reality no existence ;—the Philosopher of Nature will be terrible in this, that he has allied himself with the primitive powers of nature, that he can conjure up the demoniac forces of old German pantheism ; and having done so, there is aroused in him that ancient German eagerness for battle which combats not for the sake of destroying, not even for the sake of victory, but merely for the sake of combat itself. Christianity—and this is its fairest merit—subdued to a certain extent the brutal warrior ardour of the Germans,

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but it could not entirely quench it ; and when the Cross, that restraining talisman, falls to pieces, then will break forth again the ferocity of the old combatants, the frantic Berserker rage whereof Northern poets have said and sung so much. The talisman has become rotten, and the day will come when it will pitifully crumble to dust. The old stone gods will then arise from the forgotten ruins and wipe from their eyes the dust of centuries, and the old Norse god Thor with his giant hammer will arise again, and he will shatter the Gothic cathedrals... When you hear the trampling of feet and the clashing of arms, you neighbours' children, you French, be on your guard, and see that you mingle not in the fray going on amongst us at home in Germany. It might fare ill with you. See that you take no hand in kindling the fire ; see that you attempt not to extinguish it. You might easily burn your fingers in the flame. Smile not at my counsel, at the counsel of a dreamer, who warns you against Kantians, Fichteans, Philosophers of Nature. Smile not at the fantasy of one who foresees in the region of reality the same outburst of revolution that has taken place in the reign of intellect. The thought precedes the deed as the lightning the thunder. German thunder is of true German character : it is not very nimble, but rumbles along somewhat slowly. But come it will, and when you hear a crashing such as never before has been heard in the world's history, then know that at last the German thunderbolt has fallen. At this commotion the eagles will drop dead from the skies and the lions in the farthest

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wastes of Africa will bite their tails and creep into their royal lairs. There will be played in Germany a drama compared to which the French Revolution will seem but an innocent idyll. At present, it is true, all is tolerably quiet ; and though here and there some few men create a little stir, do not imagine these are to be the real actors in the piece. They are only little curs chasing one another round the empty arena, barking and snapping at one another, till the appointed hour when the troop of gladiators appear, to fight for life and death.

And the hour will come. As on the steps of an amphitheatre, the nations will group themselves around Germany to witness the terrible combat. I counsel you, you French, keep very quiet, and, above all, see that you do not applaud. We might readily misunderstand such applause, and, in our rude fashion, somewhat roughly put you to silence. For, if formerly in our servile, listless mood we could sometimes overpower you, much easier were it for us to do so in the arrogance of our new-born enthusiasm for liberty. You yourselves know what, in such a case, men can do ; and you are no longer in such a case. Take heed, then ! I mean well by you ; therefore it is I tell you the bitter truth. You have more to fear from a free Germany than from the entire Holy Alliance with all its Croats and Cossacks. For, in the first place, they do not love you in Germany, which is almost incomprehensible, since you are so amiable, and during your stay amongst us took such pains to please at least the better and fairer half of the German people.

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But even though this half still loved you, it is precisely the half that does not bear arms, and whose friendship, therefore, would be of little help to you. What you are really accused of I could never understand Once in a beer-cellar at Göttingen I heard a young Old-German assert that it was necessary to be revenged on France for Conradi n of Hohenstaufen, whom you beheaded at Naples. Doubtless you have long since forgotten that: we, however, forget nothing. You see, then, that whenever we have a mind to quarrel with you there will be no lack of valid grounds. In any case, I advise you to be on your guard. Happen what may in Germany, though the Crown Prince of Prussia or Dr. Wirth should attain supremacy, be ever armed; remain quietly at your post, your weapons in your hands. I mean well by you, and I was seized with dismay when I heard it said lately that your Ministry proposed to disarm France.

As you are, despite your present romantic tendency, a born classical people, you know Olympus. Amongst the naked gods and goddesses quaffing and feasting of nectar and ambrosia, you may behold one goddess who, amidst such gaiety and pastime, wears ever a coat of mail, the helm on her head and the spear in her hand.

She is the goddess of wisdom.

## THE WEAVERS OF SILESIA

In tearless eyes their fury glooms,  
They show their teeth, sit at their looms ;  
We weave your shroud, O Germany,  
We weave your shroud with curses three,  
                We weave, we weave !

A curse on God to whom we prayed,  
In vain we hoped that He would aid,  
In winter's grip and hunger's anguish ;  
He mocked us, fooled us, let us languish—  
                We weave, we weave !

A curse on the king, the rich man's king,  
Whose heart our misery could not wring,  
Who takes our last coins for his purse,  
And shoots us down like worthless curs—  
                We weave, we weave !

A curse on the false fatherland,  
Where but disgrace and shame can stand,  
Where every flower soon is blighted,  
By mould and rot the worm's delighted—  
                We weave, we weave !

The shuttle flies, crack goes the loom,  
By day and night we weave your doom,  
We weave your shroud, Old Germany,  
We weave your shroud with curses three,  
                We weave, we weave !

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## ROAMING RATS

There are two sorts of rat :  
The hungry and the fat.  
The fat ones stay content at home,  
The hungry ones prefer to roam.

They wander many a thousand mile,  
And never sleep or rest awhile,  
Straight on in their grim course they go.  
They care for neither rain nor snow.

They climb the highest mountains steep,  
They swim across the ocean deep :  
Some break their necks and some get drowned,  
The living rats are onward bound.

These funny ratty louts  
Have awful, frightful snouts ;  
Close shaved and shorn are all their pates,  
Quite radical, as bald as rats.

This radical society  
Knows nothing of a deity,  
They don't baptize their brats,  
Their wives are shared by all the rats.

These rats, they are a sensual lot,  
They only want to swill and glut,  
They swill and glut, and eat and drink,  
Of our immortal souls don't think.

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Now this wild kind of rat,  
Fears neither hell nor cat ;  
It has no land, it has no cash,  
It wants to order things afresh.

Alas, the roaming rats ! Their band  
Already is quite close at hand.  
They're coming to this region—  
Their squeaking's loud—their name is legion.

Oh dear ! We're lost, it is too late ;  
They're here before the city gate !  
The mayor and the corporation,  
They shake their heads in consternation.

The citizens, they quickly arm,  
The priests ring bells to sound alarm,  
Our property we must defend,  
The city's moral fundament.

No bells, no cleric's prayers or pleas,  
No honourable State decrees,  
No cannons, howe'er much they weigh,  
Can help you, dear children, today !

It is no use today your seeking  
Antiquated tricks of speaking.  
You can't catch rats with syllogisms,  
They leap over the finest sophisms.

A hungry stomach will only take  
Logic of stew and reasons of steak,

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And mutton chops as arguments,  
With bread and cheese as documents.

A silent slice of savoury fish  
For radicals is a prettier dish,  
Much better than a Mirabeau  
And all orators since Cicero.



# LUDWIG BORNE

(real name Löb Baruch, 1786-1837)



*German political and critical journalist, lived and died as a refugee in Paris, and played a considerable part in the German liberal movement of his time. He is the real ancestor of that literary radicalism, entirely honest, but abstract and soulless, which then innocently made much mischief in the first German Republic 1918--33. After Börne's death, Heinrich Heine dedicated to him one of his most mordant political satires, which in its entire lack of consideration even in respect to private personal matters, bears some resemblance to the "Letters of Junius."*

## POLITICAL AND UNPOLITCAL MAXIMS

 GERMAN history is like an unbound book ; so troublesome and irksome is it to read. We have to turn the pages over often, and lose the thread over it, and the title and index not infrequently lie hidden in the middle.

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\*

At a meeting held by the Academy of Sciences at Munich in honour of the king's birthday, Professor Oken read a paper on the law of numbers in human vertebrae. He sought to demonstrate that 5 is the ruling number in this part of human anatomy, and then concludes with the words : " This law and order in our bodies, indeed in one single system thereof, who would not be moved thereby, who would not be inspired to rejoice over that law and order which he recognises in history and life too, the image of nature and human life ! Who would not think of the country in which law and order prevail, in which institutions exist and flourish, whereby science is enabled to recognise these laws and art to present this harmony : in which scholars and artists are given leisure to work in this fertile field and pleasure to thank him through whom all this was called forth and is maintained and promoted, the King of scholars and artists ! "

A German professor like that is possessed by the

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devil ! He is at one and the same time an osteologist and a courtier, he is a Jack of all trades ! Five bones for one birthday, what a gift ! In what fine pentameters the praises of the Bavarian king are sung ! Bavarian Law, firm as a spinal column ! What will ill-treated and oppressed peoples say when they learn that their backs, far from being destined to bear heavy burdens and to be thrashed, rather attest their right to a free constitution ?

\* \* \*

Before the Revolution it was the custom at the French Court for a bourgeois child to be brought up with the royal princes, and every time the young prince did something wrong, this child was punished in his stead. The German people serve a similar bourgeois purpose. Whenever the French, the Spaniards and Portuguese, the Neapolitans and Piedmontese, the Russians, are naughty to their rulers, the poor German children get slapped. It is too sad ; we must hurry and grow up.

\* \* \*

The State builders think that all they need do to stop the smoking, is to wall in the chimneys. They do so, drive the smoke back, increase it, get angry about it, and have no idea that their own ignorance is augmenting the evil.

\* \* \*

Just imagine : a physician forbids his patient any continuous movement ; it might prove fatal to him, says he. The patient is disobedient and walks a mile. What

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would you say of that physician who, to put the mistake right, made the patient walk that mile back again? Now imagine: A people is ill, movement is forbidden to it; but it has nevertheless moved. Now what would you think of the State physicians if, to repair the damage, they were to lead the people back to their starting-point?

\* \* \*

When, as often happens in Germany, laws are framed in the language of commands, the citizens grow accustomed to regarding laws as mere commands to be obeyed, not because they honour them, but because they fear them.

\* \* \*

Never was learning so highly honoured by the great in Germany as now. I am speaking seriously when I say this; but it is dreadful that the Germans cannot understand seriousness because they don't understand fun. There was a time when any academic teacher, even if he were convicted of lèse-majesté, (as long as criminalist formalities did not stand in the way) would have been allowed to continue teaching calmly until the hour of the execution. So sharply differentiated were life and learning that the public speech even of a criminal was not feared. But now, if only the faintest shadow of suspicion falls on the loyal mentality of a professor, his lectures are suspended forthwith. Is not this respect for learning? Maybe it is fear, but fear leads to respect. In former times the superior among the great loved learning, but they loyed it as we love a game, a child, a

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maiden, they did not respect it. It is better now. We ought to tremble before learning; for the mind should be king of the universe, and justice his sword.

\* \* \* \*

They do not want any freedom of the press, because they think the wind turns according to the weathercock.

\* \* \* \*

The Germans are by nature so innately slavish, that if they were free to forego their own freedom, if the governments did not think more nobly than they, they would subject all their actions, their thought and speech, their goings-out and their comings-in, their eating and drinking, their laughter and tears, everything down to their very dreams, to the weights and measures and tact of the laws, judges and administrators. Such abject people by no means deserve to have good princes, they ought to be sent to Morocco. And not only men of this or that party, but men of all parties have frequently evinced such low sentiments.

\* \* \* \*

The Germans cannot leave commanding and obeying alone, and it is difficult to decide which of the two gives them the greater pleasure. It is a highly German poet, too, who sings:

You must rule or serve,  
An anvil or a hammer be.

An apt saying, though it contains a great untruth and

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a disgraceful calumny of human nature. Rule or serve, that means being a slave in one way or another ; there golden bars enclose the cage, here iron ones. The chain that binds is just as much bound as the thing it binds. But man is born for freedom, and only as much as the air needs an admixture of nitrogen to be respirable, only so much must freedom be limited, to remain enjoyable. But whosoever were to blame the governments for this excessive governing, as for a fault, would, at least in Germany, be guilty of a great injustice. It is the fault and weakness of the subjects. Try it and repeal the hundred superfluous laws which prohibit that which should not be prohibited or permit that for which no permission should be necessary, and you will see how hampered the citizens will feel at every step, and how they will lament the lack of a regulation.

This is because they lack virtue which without any compulsion gives everyone his due ; and they lack virtue because they lack strength that knows how to defend its own right ; and they lack strength because they lack the mind which is the lever of the will ; and they lack mind because they are Germans.

\*                     \*                     \*

Ministers fall like slices of bread and butter ; generally on the good side.

\*                     \*                     \*

It is difficult to decide which is the more irksome business : trimming candles, or instructing women by means of arguments. Every two minutes all the work

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has to be repeated, and if we grow impatient, the little candle may be extinguished altogether.

\* \* . \*

A sweetheart is milk, a bride butter, a wife cheese.

\* \* . \*

From a speech made by Deputy Girardin in the French Chamber, we learn that under the old Royal regime the letters were opened at the post-offices, the same thing was also done under Napoleon, and is still done now. Whenever we speak to some statesmen about such matters, they smile, and that is really the best they can do, for how could a smile be refuted? It is an alphabet in which the letters of all possible opinions are contained. What do they reply, however, when they are asked: Did those encroachments on property save Louis XVI? Did they preserve Napoleon from his downfall? When they are asked: Did a thousand tasteless police tricks, which people are even now not yet ashamed to use, did they prevent the Spanish, the Portuguese and other revolutions, did they prevent the revolt of the South American States?—

What will they be able to reply to that? Will you never understand that you are not dealing with persons, but that you are confronted with hostile things, and that a thing, like air, is invulnerable? You rejoice if you succeed in making a small space exhausted of air, and you forget that it is then all the more dangerous for you, because, in spaces exhausted of air, falling bodies fall all the faster. True, such speeches are in vain, and we are

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laughed at for them ; but it is better to lose our breath than our reason.

\* \* \*

German newspapers, both the political and the non-political ones, are, with a few exceptions, indescribably tasteless. Generally there is something romantic about poverty, there is something touching in beggary ; but the German papers have only the unpleasant side of poverty, only the insufferable side of beggary. All the newspapers are every day and in every place filled to the brim with accounts of actors and singers, and the foreigners who read our papers must think that thirty millions of worthy Germans do nothing but act and sing, and had no mind for anything but acting and singing....

Oh, it is a disgrace ! We might think we were back in the days of the Roman Emperors, when degenerate princes and degenerate peoples, covered over and over with the slime of the lusts, cast ravenous glances after a charioteer in the arena, and did not even hear that the barbarians were already storming the gates !

\* \* \*

•The passions of governments show weakness, but the passions of the people show strength.

\* \* \*

Statesmen write down their experiences in pencil on parchment tablets, and when the page is full, they erase the remarks again, to make room for new ones. Hence they are often wiser than yesterday, but never wiser than the day before yesterday.

\* \* \*

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When the royal Spanish troops marched into Valencia in the year 1812 under General Wittingham, the announcement was made everywhere by notice and drum : " The police introduced by Suchet shall entirely cease. " The populace were beside themselves for joy, and cried continually : Now we are, as before, safe in the street and in our houses : there is no more police. " . . .

\* \* \*

. In civil society the people give up their natural freedom to the government as a loan for stipulated interest. If this is kept back or decreased, they rightly withdraw their capital and seek another debtor.

\* \* \*

We can prevent peoples from learning, but we cannot make them unlearn anything.

\* \* \*

If the prince thinks the people is a coach-horse which, provided with a bit and blinkers, must be harnessed to the State coach in which only he sits—and if the people take the State for a family coach which is to be drawn by the ruler alone ; then both err. But what else is the State ? It is difficult to give an answer. The political circle can never be completely forced into the quadrature of a definition.

\* \* \*

The people have misused freedom only when they have taken it for themselves, not when it has been given to them. Thus he who has been long imprisoned, and who by his own strength breaks open his dark

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dungeon, is dazzled by the sunlight suddenly streaming in, he staggers, and knows not what he does; but he for whom the prison opens gently and of its own accord, leaves it full of thankfulness and goes home rejoicing and calm.

\* \* \*

Caligula had his laws hung up on high, so that the citizens could not read them, so that they would overstep them and thus be punished. Had Caligula reigned in various parts of Germany, all his trickery would have been quite unnecessary. For many ordinances, framed in the usual Chancery style, are not only unintelligible, but often illegible too, because on the long rugged road before reaching a full stop, the eyes lose their breath, and after resting awhile, turn back sighing.

\* \* \*

Not all revolutions are preceded by signs and warnings; there is such a thing as political apoplexy too.

\* \* \*

Each hour squandered in hate is an eternity withdrawn from love.

\* \* \*

A man of intellect will not only never say anything stupid, he will never hear anything stupid either.

\* \* \*

"Man proposes, God disposes" . . . Now that's another untrue saying. If God wants to dispose, he arranges it so that man does not propose, he makes him lose his head.

\* \* \*

*Ludwig Börne*

Yes, chaste, cold and pale as the moon are the German people ; chaste because cold, cold because pale, and pale because bloodless. Doctor Howard in America has discovered that the rays of the moon contain heat ; but it was only through a burning-glass that he succeeded in affecting the thermometer. But where is there a burning-glass big enough to stretch over the heads of thirty million people ?.

\* \* \*

At the horse-races in England the Government gives an additional prize to him whose horse surpasses all others. The prizes are awarded by a jury consisting of horse-owners, and is quite independent of the Government. We see that horses are better off in England than men are in Germany.

\* \* \*

The people, like a child, can only weep or laugh. Whether it is in pain or whether it rejoices, is easy to see ; but the cause of its suffering or its joy, is often difficult to fathom.

\* \* \*

When Pythagoras discovered his famous theorem, he offered a hecatomb to the gods. Since then oxen have trembled every time a new truth comes to light.

\* \* \*

Rousseau had a German heart and a British mind ; the only French thing about him was his language.

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The dog howls when he is beaten, and is man not to be allowed to do so too? But there are men who are more doggish than dogs—and do not howl when they are beaten.

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Governments do evil more frequently from cowardice than from insolence.

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They want to drive the Jews out of Neuchatel. Curious. 130,000 clocks are manufactured there every year, and yet the rulers of the land do not know what time of day it is!

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ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

( 1788-1860 )



*German pessimistic philosopher, profoundly influenced by ancient Indian philosophy. Principal work: "The World as Will and Imagination" ("Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung").—Influenced Friedrich Nietzsche and above all Richard Wagner, whose operatic music ("Tristan und Isolde") is quite consciously constructed upon Schopenhauer's philosophy. An English selection with a masterly introduction from his pen has recently been published by Thomas Mann, whose own works likewise very often show the influence of Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer, one of the most widely read men of his century, was especially also a connoisseur in English literature, and one of the best German prose writers.*

## GOOD STYLE—AND THE STYLE OF GERMAN PHILOSOPHERS

(From Schopenhauer: "Ueber Schriftstellerei und Stil")

In order to obtain a provisional estimate of the value of an author's productions it is not really necessary to know the matter on which he has thought or what he has thought about it--one would have to read the whole of his works for that--but in the first place it suffices to know how he has thought. Now his style is an exact expression of how he has thought, of the essential nature and general quality of his thoughts. It shows the formal nature--which must always remain the same--of all the thoughts of a man, whatever the subject on which he has thought or what he has said about it. It is the dough out of which all his ideas are kneaded, however various they may be. When Eulenspiegel was asked by a man how long he would have to walk before reaching the next place; and gave the apparently stupid answer: "Walk", his intention was to judge from the man's walking how far he would go in a given time; in the same way, when I have read a few pages of an author, I know about how far he can help me.

In the secret consciousness that this is the condition of things, every mediocre writer tries to mask his own natural style. This immediately necessitates his giving

up all idea of being naïve, which therefore remains a privilege belonging to superior minds sensible of their superiority and consequently sure of themselves. Those vulgar brains simply cannot decide to write as they think: for they feel, rightly, that their work would then look too simple. It would always be of some value; however. If they would only go honestly to work and in a simple way express the few and ordinary ideas they have really thought, they would be readable and even instructive in their own sphere. But instead of that they try to appear to have thought much more deeply than is the case. Consequently they put what they have to say into forced and involved language, create new words and prolix periods which go round the thought and cover it up. They hesitate between the two attempts of communicating the thought and of concealing it. They want to make it look grand so that it has the appearance of being learned and profound, thereby giving one the impression that there is much more in it than one perceives at the first glance. Accordingly, they sometimes put down their thoughts in bits, in short, ambiguous and paradoxical sentences which appear to mean much more than they say (splendid examples of this kind of writing are furnished by Schelling's treatises on Natural Philosophy); sometimes they express their thoughts in a mass of words and the most intolerable diffuseness, as if I do not know how many preparations were necessary to make the profound meaning of their phrases intelligible—while it is quite a simple idea if not

a trivial one (innumerable examples are supplied in Fichte's popular works and in the philosophical pamphlets of a hundred other miserable blockheads that are not worth mentioning), or else they take pains to adopt a certain style in writing which they suppose to be especially refined—for example, a style that is so awfully solid and scientific that one is tortured to death by the narcotic effect of long-spun periods that are void of all thoughts (examples of this are specially supplied by those most impudent of all mortals, the disciples of Hegel, in their Hegel newspaper commonly known as “*Jahrbücher der wissenschaftlichen Literatur*”); or again, they aim at a high-flown style where it seems as if they wish to go crazy, and so on. All such efforts whereby they try to postpone the *nascetur ridiculus mus* often make it difficult to understand what they really mean. Moreover, they write down words, nay, whole periods, which mean nothing in themselves; in the hope, however, that some one else will discover some meaning in them. Nothing else is at the bottom of all such endeavours but the indefatigable attempt which is always venturing on new paths, to sell words for thoughts, and by means of new expressions, or expressions used in a new sense, turns of phrases and combinations of all kinds, to produce the appearance of intellect in order to compensate for the want of it which they so painfully feel. It is amusing to see how, with this aim in view, first this mannerism and that is tried, as a mask which they put on to represent intellect; this mask may possibly deceive the inexperi-

ienced for a while, until it is recognised as being nothing but a dead mask ; when it is then laughed at, they exchange it for another.

There are writers who sometimes write in a dithyrambic style, as if they were drunk ; at other times, nay, on the very next page, they will be highflown, severe, and deeply learned, prolix to the last degree of dulness, and cutting everything very small, like the late Christian Wolf, but in modern garb. The mask of unintelligibility holds out the longest ; but only in Germany, where it was introduced by Fichte, perfected by Schelling, and finally reached its highest climax in Hegel, always with success. And yet nothing is easier than to write so that no one can understand ; on the other hand, nothing is more difficult than to express profound ideas so that every one must understand them. All the above-cited arts are superfluous if the writer really possesses intellect, for it allows a man to show himself as he is and verifies what Horace said :

• *Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons.*

But this class of authors is like certain workers in metal, who try a hundred different compositions to take the place of irreplaceable gold. On the contrary, there is nothing an author should guard against more than the apparent endeavour to show more intellect than he has ; because this rouses the suspicion in the reader that he has very little, because when a man affects something, no matter what, it is invariably something that he does not really possess. This is why it is praise to an author to call

him naive, for it signifies that he may show himself as he is. Naivete generally attracts, while what is unnatural everywhere repels. We also find that every true thinker endeavours to express his thoughts as purely, clearly, definitely and concisely as ever possible. This is why simplicity has always been regarded as a sign not only of truth, but of genius too. Style receives its beauty from the thought expressed, while those writers who only pretend to be thinkers, try to make their thoughts beautiful by means of their style. Now style is merely the silhouette of thought; and to write in a vague or bad style means a foggy or confused mind.

Hence the first rule—nay, this in itself is almost sufficient for a good style—is, that the author should have something to say. Ah! this means much. The neglect of this rule is a fundamental characteristic of the philosophical, and generally speaking of all the reflective authors in Germany, especially since Fichte. It is obvious that all these writers wish to appear to have something to say, while they have nothing to say. This mannerism was introduced by the pseudo-philosophers of the universities and may be seen everywhere, even among the first literary notabilities of the period. This is the mother of that forced, vague and ambiguous style as well as of that prolix and ponderous style, *le style empesé*; and of that no less useless bombastic style, and finally of that mode of concealing the direst poverty of thought under a babble of inexhaustible chatter like a clacking-mill and just as stupefy-

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ing: one may read for hours together without getting hold of a single clearly defined and definite idea.—

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The Germans are now in the habit of patiently reading page after page of all kinds of such verbiage without getting any definite idea of what the author really means: they think it all very proper and do not discover that he is writing merely for the sake of writing. A good author, on the other hand, who is rich in ideas, soon gains the reader's credit of having really and truly something to say; and this gives the intelligent reader patience to follow him attentively: An author of this kind will always express himself in the simplest and most direct manner, for the very reason that he really has something to say; because he wishes to awaken in the reader the same idea he has in his own mind and no other. Accordingly he will be able to say with Boileau:

Ma pensée au grand jour partout s'offre et s'expose,

Et mon vers, bien ou mal, dit toujours quelque chose; while of those previously described writers it may be said, in the words of the same poet, "et qui parlant beaucoup ne disent jamais rien." It is also a characteristic of such writers to avoid, if at all possible, expressing themselves definitely, so that in case of need they can still get their necks out of the hangman's ropes; hence they always choose the more abstract expressions: while people of intellect, choose the more concrete; because the latter bring the matter closer to view, which is the source of all evidence.

One might even say that the stupidity and tediousness of these everyday authors, are due to the fact that they are only half-conscious when they speak; they do not really themselves understand the meaning of their own words, because they only combine ready-made phrases, which they swallowed but did not digest. Hence their characteristic want of clearly defined thoughts; they lack the die that stamps their thoughts, i. e. clear thinking of their own; in place of it we find an indefinite, obscure interweaving of words, current phrases, worn-out terms of speech, and fashionable expressions. Hence their foggy kind of writing is like print that has been done with much-used types.—People of intellect, on the other hand, *really* speak to us in their writings, hence they are able both to enliven and to entertain us. It is only these writers of intellect who place individual words together with a full consciousness of their value, and select them with deliberation. Hence their style of writing bears the same relation to that of those authors described above, as a picture that is really *painted* does to one that has been executed with a stencil. In the first instance every word, just as every stroke of the brush, has some special significance, while in the other everything is done mechanically.

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It would be of general service to German authors if they perceived that while a man should, if possible, think like a great mind, he should speak the same language as every other person. Men should use common

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words to say uncommon things, but they do the reverse. We find them trying to clothe trivial ideas in grand words and to dress their very ordinary thoughts in the most extraordinary expressions and the most outlandish, artificial and rarest phrases. Their sentences perpetually stalk about on stilts. As to their delight in bombast and their writing generally in a grand, puffed-up, unreal, hyperbolical and acrobatic style, their prototype is Pistol, who was once impatiently requested by Falstaff, his friend, to "say what you have to say, *like a man of this world!*"—

Truth is most beautiful when it is naked, and the simpler its expression the deeper is the impression it makes; this is partly because, unhindered, it takes hold of the hearer's mind without his being distracted by secondary thoughts, and partly because he feels that here he is not being corrupted or deceived by the arts of rhetoric, but that the whole effect proceeds from the thing itself. For instance, what declamation on the vanity of human existence could be more impressive than Job's: *Homo, natus de muliere, brevi vivit tempore, repletus multis miseriis, qui, tanquam flos, egreditur et conteritur, et fugit velut umbra.*

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An author who writes carelessly at once proves that he himself attaches no great importance to his own thoughts. For it is only when we are convinced of the truth and importance of our thoughts that there arises in us the inspiration necessary for the indefatigable

## *Germans beyond Germany*

patience to find the clearest, finest and most powerful expression for them ; just as only sacred relics or priceless art treasures are preserved in silver or golden receptacles. That is why the ancient writers—whose thoughts, expressed in their own words, have lasted for thousands of years and hence bear the honoured title of classics—wrote with the utmost care. Plato is said to have written the introduction to his Republic several times with different modifications. The Germans, on the other hand, are conspicuous above all nations for neglect of style in writing, as, too, for neglect of dress and both these kinds of slovenliness have their source in the German national character. Just as neglect of dress betrays contempt for the society in which a man moves, so does a hasty, careless, and bad style show a great disrespect for the reader, who then rightly punishes it by not reading the book. Those critics are especially amusing who criticise the works of others in the most careless hack style of writing. It is just as if a judge were to appear in court in dressing-gown and slippers. By way of contrast, how carefully the “ Edinburgh Review ” and the “ Journal des Savants ” are written !— . .

But in Germany ! Like paid hacks, they scribble down what they have to say in the first expressions that come into their unwashed snouts, without style, even without grammar and logic—in short, they perpetrate every possible asinine stupidity of style.

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The true national character of the Germans is clumsiness: this appears from their walk, their actions, their language, their talking, telling, understanding and thinking, and most of all from their style of writing, from the delight they take in heavy, involved periods wherein the memory quite alone, for five minutes at a stretch, patiently learns the lesson set for it, until finally at the conclusion of the period, reason comes in, and the puzzles are solved. This gives them pleasure, and if in addition preciosity and bombast and affectation can be brought in, the author is in the seventh heaven of delight: but Heaven give the reader patience!—Above all they strive ever after as much indecision and indefiniteness of expression as possible; whereby everything seems wrapped in fog; the purpose is apparently, partly to leave a back door open in every sentence, and partly superciliousness, which likes to seem to say more than was thought; in part this peculiarity arises from actual dulness and sleepiness, and it is precisely this that makes all German scribbling so hateful to foreigners, because they just do not like groping in the dark; whereas our countrymen find it so congenial.

Why, is the German language outlawed, as a trifle which is not worthy of the protection of the laws, a protection enjoyed by every rubbish-heap?—Wretched Philistines!—What in all the world is to become of the German language if scribblers and journalists retain discretionary power to deal with it just according to their moods and their lack of understanding?—

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And how, indeed, should such a pachyderm have any feeling for the delicate nature of a language, that precious, soft material handed down to thinking minds, so that they may be able to take up and preserve an accurate and fine thought ? To count letters, on the other hand, that's a job for pachyderms. See how they delight in murdering the language, these noble sons of "the present day". Look at them ! Bald pates, long beards, spectacles instead of eyes, a cigar in their beastly snouts, a sack on their backs instead of a coat, loafing about instead of diligence, arrogance instead of knowledge, impudence and partisanship instead of merit. Noble "present-day", glorious epigones, a generation which drank Hegelian philosophy as their mother's milk ! As an everlasting remembrance you want to stick your claws into our ancient language, in order that the imprint, as an ichnolite, may forever preserve the trace of your dull and insipid existence. But *Di meliora* ! Away, pachyderms, away ! This is the German language ! in which men have expressed themselves, yes, in which great poets have sung and great thinkers written. Take your claws away ! or you shall starve. ( Only this frightens them. )

# ON PRESS AND LITERARY CRITICISM

(From Schopenhauer : "Ueber Schriftstellerei und Stil")

The literary reviews ought to be the dam to check the unscrupulous ink-slinging of our time and to stem the ever-rising tide of useless and bad books; incorruptible, judging justly and severely, they should mercilessly chastise every wretched work of the incompetent, every bit of scribbling by means of which empty heads attempt to assist empty purses, consequently quite nine-tenths of all books, thus counteracting, as is their duty, the itch to write and the blackmail, instead of encouraging them by their vile tolerance being in league with authors and publishers, to rob the public of time and money.

As a rule the authors are professors or litterateurs who write for the sake of the money, on account of the low salaries and poor remuneration: now as their purpose is a common one, they have a common interest, they stick together, they support one another, and each one defends the other; hence the laudatory critiques of bad books, which form the contents of the literary reviews, whose motto should therefore be: "Live and let live!" (And the public is simple enough to read the latest rather than the good.)

Is there, or was there, indeed, one among these reviews which can boast of never having praised the most worthless trash, never having blamed and disparaged

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excellent writing, or cunningly, to distract attention from it, treated it as insignificant? Is there a single one which has always chosen the books conscientiously according to their importance and not on the strength of personal influence or partisanship or even because of bribes received from the publishers? Does not everyone who is not a greenhorn, as soon as he finds a book highly praised or severely censured, almost mechanically glance back at the firm of publishers? If, on the other hand, there were a literary review on the lines above indicated, then every bad writer, every witless compiler, every plagiarist, every hollow, incapable philosophaster hungry for a job, every vain poetaster, faced with the prospect of the pillory in which his wretched composition would now speedily and invariably have to be exposed, would feel his itching scribbler's fingers paralysed, to the true salvation of literature, in which the bad is not only useless, but indeed positively pernicious. Now the vast majority of books are bad and ought to have remained unwritten: consequently praise ought to be as rare as blame is now, under the influence of personal consideration and the maxim "*accedas socius, laudes lauderis ut absens.*" It is absolutely wrong to extend to literature too that tolerance towards dull, brainless people necessarily shown them in society which is swarming with them everywhere. For here they are shameless intruders, and here it is a duty towards the good, to put down the bad: for whoso accounts nothing bad accounts nothing good either.—

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Above all, therefore, anonymity, that shield of all literary rascality, should thereby be abolished. In literary reviews it was introduced on the pretext that it was to protect the honest critic, the warner of the public, from the ill-will of the author and his patrons. However, as against one case of this kind there will be a hundred in which it merely serves to exonerate from all responsibility him who cannot stand by what he says, or even to veil the shame of him who, for a tip from the publisher, is mercenary and base enough to recommend a bad book to the public. Often, too, anonymity only serves to cover the obscurity, incompetence and insignificance of the reviewer. It is incredible what impudence takes possession of the chaps and from what literary rascalities they do not recoil, when they know themselves safe beneath the shadow of anonymity.—Just as there are universal specifics, even so the following is a universal anti-critique against all anonymous critiques, whether they have praised the bad or blamed the good: “Blackguard, name thyself! Because to go about muffled up and disguised, attacking people who walk with their faces exposed, is not an honest man’s game! Only knaves and blackguards do that.—Sò: “Blackguard name thyself!” probatum est.

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The freedom of the press which was at last attained in Germany, and which was immediately misused in the most dishonourable fashion, ought at least to be restricted by a prohibition of all anonymity and pseudonymity,

so that each one would be responsible at least with his honour—if he still has any—for what he publicly proclaims through the far-reaching speaking-tube of the press ; and if he has no honour left, then so that his name may neutralise his speech. An anonymous critic is a fellow who does not want to stand by what he tells ( or does not tell ) the world about others and their work, and therefore does not name himself. All anonymous criticism is deceitful. Just as the police do not allow us to go about the alleys masked, they ought not to allow us to write anonymously. Literary reviews are essentially the place where ignorance with impunity sits in judgment on erudition, and stupidity on intellect, and where the public is with impunity deceived, and even cheated of its time and money, by praise of the bad. And we tolerate this ? Is not anonymity the stronghold of all literary, especially journalistic, rascality ? It must therefore be pulled down, razed to the ground, i. e. in such a way that even every newspaper article must always bear the author's name, the editor being held strictly responsible for the genuineness of the signature. By this means two-thirds of newspaper lies would be abolished, and the impudence of many a poisonous tongue would be kept in check, because even the most insignificant is nevertheless known in the town where he resides.

But in literature, until this prohibition comes into existence, all honest authors should unite to proscribe anonymity with the brand of public, daily and indefatigably expressed, utmost contempt, and to assert in every

possible way that anonymous criticism is a dishonour and a disgrace. To attack anonymously people who have not written anonymously is manifestly dishonourable. Whosoever writes and polemizes anonymously, has *eo ipso* the presumption against him of wanting to deceive the public, or without risk to injure the honour of others.

Hence all mention of an anonymous critic, even the most parenthetic and otherwise not censorious, should only be made by epithets like "that cowardly anonymous rascal at such and such a place", or "the disguised anonymous scoundrel in that journal" etc. This is really the decent and suitable tone in which to speak of such fellows, so that they may feel disgusted with their work. For obviously personal respect can only be claimed by him who lets the public see who he is, so that we may know with whom we are dealing; but not by him who steals about masked and disguised, thereby making himself useless: rather is such a one *ipso facto* outlawed. He is Mr. Nobody, and everyone is free to assert that Mr. Nobody is a scoundrel. Hence one should immediately call every anonymous critic, especially in anti-critiques, a rascal and a villain, and not "the respected critic", as some authors tainted by the pack call them from cowardice. "A cowardly rascal who does not name himself!" must be the watchword of all honest authors. And if afterwards anyone renders the service of thus unmasking one of these fellows who has run the gauntlet, seizing him by the ear and dragging him forth, then the night-owl will cause great jubilation by day.—In every

verbal slander of which we hear, the first outburst of indignation is generally expressed in the question : "Who says that?"—But there anonymity refuses to reply.

An especially ridiculous impertinence of such anonymous critics is to speak in terms of "we" like kings ; whereas they ought to speak not only in the singular, but in the diminutive, indeed in the humiliitive, e. g. "my contemptible nullity", "my cowardly cunning," "my masked incompetence", "my wretched blackmaility" etc. This would be fitting language for masked rogues, those snakes in the grass hissing from the dark hole of a "small local literary rag", whose trade must at last really be stopped. Anonymity is in literature what material rougery is in society. "Name yourself, rascal, or shut up!" must be the watchword. Until then, when we see a critique without a signature, we can immediately supply : "Rogue!"—This trade may bring in money, but not honour.—Only an anonymous book might be reviewed anonymously. In any case, if anonymity were abolished, ninety-nine-hundredths of all literary rascalities would go too. Until the trade is proscribed, we should, upon occasion, concentrate on the person who runs the show (manager and proprietor of the anonymous reviewing institute), hold him directly and personally responsible for the sins committed by his hacks, indeed in that tone to which his trade entitles us. No lie is too impudent for an anonymous critic to indulge in ; for the responsibility is not his.—For my own part, I would just as soon run a gambling-casino or a brothel, as an insti-

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tution for such anonymous cheating, swindling and slandering.

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# ON BRAHMANISM, PARSIM, JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

( From "Parerga und Paralipomena" 1849 )

*They have been the consolation of my life and will be that of my death.*

( Schopenhauer on Upanishads )

There are two opposite ways of becoming conscious of one's own existence: firstly, empirically, as it appears from outside, as an infinitesimally small existence in a universe limitless both in time and space; as one among the thousand millions of human beings who run about on this globe, a very short time, renewing themselves every thirty years;—but then, by becoming absorbed in one's own inner self and becoming conscious of being all in all and really the only actual being which, in addition, sees himself in the other, given to him from outside, again, as in a mirror. Now, that the former way of knowledge merely grasps the phenomenon mediated by the principium individuationis, but that the other way is an immediate realisation of oneself as of the "thing-in-itself"—this is a doctrine in which I have on my side, to support me, Kant for the first half, and the Veda for both. It is true there is the simple objection to the latter way of knowledge, namely that it presupposes that

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one and the same being can be in different places at the same time and yet wholly in each. Even though, from the empirical standpoint, this is the most palpable impossibility, indeed an absurdity; nevertheless, it remains perfectly true of the "thing-in-itself"; because that impossibility and absurdity rests merely on the forms of the phenomenon, which constitute the principium individuationis. For the "thing-in-itself", the will to live, is present in every thing, even the lowest, whole and undivided, as complete as in all that ever were, are, and shall be, taken together. And this is precisely why every being, even the lowest, says to itself: "dum ego salvus sim, pereat mundus." And in truth, even if all other beings perished, in this one remaining being the whole being-in-itself of the world would still stand uninjured and undiminished, and would laugh at that downfall as at an illusion. This is certainly an inference per impossible, as a counterpart to which we can with equal justification set this inference, that if any being, even the lowest, were wholly destroyed, the whole world would be destroyed in it and with it. It is in this sense that the mystic Angelus Silesius says: . "I know that without me God one moment cannot live: If I am destroyed, he is necessarily compelled to give up the ghost."

And yet reflections like the above, always retain a very exotic savour here in our Judaized Occident: not so in the cradle of the human race, in that country where

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quite a different faith prevails, a faith according to which, even at the present day, e. g. after the disposal of the dead, the priests, in the presence of all the people and accompanied by musical instruments, intone the Veda hymn which begins :

“ The embodied spirit which has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet, has its root in the human breast and at the same time penetrates the whole earth. This being is the world and all that ever was and shall be. It is that which grows through food, and that which lends immortality. This is its greatness : and that is why it is the most glorious embodied spirit. The elements of this world constitute one part of its being, and three parts are immortality in heaven. These three parts have risen up from the world ; but the one part has remained behind, and is that which (through the transmigration of souls) enjoys and does not enjoy the fruits of good and bad deeds ” etc. (after Colebrooke, On the religious ceremonies of the Hindus, in Vol. 5 of “ Asiatic Researches ” p. 345 of the Calcutta edition, also in his Miscellaneous Essays, Vol. I, p. 167. )

If we now compare such hymns with our hymn-books, it will no longer be astonishing that the Anglican missionaries have so little success on the banks of the Ganges and produce no effect on the Brahmans with

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their sermons on their "Maker"<sup>1</sup>. He who would indulge in the pleasure of seeing how, as far back as 41 years ago, an English officer keenly and emphatically combated the absurd and impudent pretensions of those gentlemen, should read the "Vindication of the Hindoos from the aspersions of the reverend Claudius Buchanan, with a refutation of his arguments in favour of an

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<sup>1</sup> "Maker" is the German "Macher" and is commonly used in compounds, e. g. watchmaker, shoemaker, etc. "Our Maker" is a very usual and favourite expression for "God" in English writings sermons and every-day life; I beg to submit that this is highly characteristic of the English conception of religion. Now, how a Brahman brought up in the doctrine of the sacred Veda and the Vaisya who emulates him, indeed, the whole of the Indian people, permeated by the belief in the metempsychosis and the expiation by means of it, and mindful thereof at every incident throughout their lives, must feel when attempts are made to force such notions upon them, the informed reader will readily judge. To go over from the eternal brahma, which exists in all beings and in every being, suffers, lives and hopes for release, to that "maker" out of nothing, is rather too much to expect of those people. Never will it be possible to persuade them that the universe and man were "made" out of nothing. Rightly, therefore, does the noble author of the book to be praised shortly in the text, say on Page 15: "The attempts of the missionaries will remain fruitless: no Hindu of any standing will ever yield to their exhortations." Similarly, on Page 50, after presenting the main tenets of Brahmanism: "To hope that, permeated by these views in which they live, move and have their being, they will ever give them up, in order to adopt the Christian doctrine, is, in my firm conviction, a vain expectation." And, on Page 68: "And if, for such purpose, the entire synod of the Church of England were to set to work, they would truly not succeed, unless by absolute compulsion, in converting even one person in a thousand in the vast population of India."—

ecclesiastical establishment in British India : the whole tending to evince the excellence of the moral system of the Hindoos ; by a Bengal officer. Lond. 1808."—In this work the author, with rare ingenuousness, sets forth the advantages of the doctrines of faith of Hindostan over those of Europe. This small essay presents the eminently beneficent practical influence of Brahmanism, its practice in life and among the people, better and with more sincerity than any other essay known to me—quite differently from the accounts penned by clergymen which, as such, deserve but scant belief ; but agreeing, on the other hand, with what I have heard verbally from English officers who have spent half their lives in India. In order to know how envious and furious the Church of England, ever trembling for her benefices, is against Brahmanism, we must, for instance, be acquainted with the loud barking which a few years ago the bishops raised in Parliament, continued for months and months and, as the East Indian authorities as usual on such occasions showed themselves exceedingly stubborn, renewed again and again, merely about a few external marks of respect which, as is fitting, were shown by English authorities in India to the ancient, venerable religion of the country ; for instance, when a procession with the images of the gods passed, the guard with their officer step out courteously and sound the drum ; further, regarding the supply of red cloth to cover Juggernaut's car, etc. The last-named, as well as the pilgrims' toll levied in connection with it, has actually been stopped, to please those

gentlemen. However, the incessant fury of those incumbents of benefices and wearers of wigs who call themselves so venerable, makes us think that it is not unknown to them how very much the majority of Europeans who live in India for a long time, become attached to Brahmanism in their hearts and only shrug their shoulders at the religious and social prejudices of Europe. "All that drops off like scales, as soon as one has lived in India only two years"—one such once said to me. Indeed, a Frenchman, a very agreeable and cultured gentleman, who, about ten years ago accompanied the devadasis in Europe, immediately exclaimed with fiery enthusiasm, when I spoke to him about the religion of that country : "Monsieur, c'est la vraie religion!"—

Even the fantastic, indeed occasionally queer Indian doctrine of gods, which today constitutes the religion of the people as it did thousands of years ago, is, when we go to the root of the matter, only the symbolised doctrine of the Upanishads, i. e. clothed in images and personified and mythicized to suit the comprehension of the people, which every Hindu according to his capacity and education perceives, or feels, or surmises, or seeing through it perceives it clearly behind, whereas the crude and narrow English Reverend, in his monomania, despises and reviles it—as idolatry: he alone, he thinks, has been fashioned in the right smithy. Contrary to this, it was the intention of the Buddha Sakya Muni, to separate the kernel from its shell, to free the lofty doctrine itself from all images and gods, and to make its pure content

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acceptable and comprehensible even to the multitude. In this he achieved signal success, and that is why his religion is the most excellent and that which counts the greatest number of adherents on earth.—

Christian fanaticism, which seeks to convert the whole world to its faith, is irresponsible.—Sir James Brooke (Rajah of Borneo), who has colonised a part of Borneo, and rules for the time being, made a speech before a gathering of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, i. e. the centre of missions, at Liverpool, in September 1858. He says : “ Among the Mahomedans you have made no progress, among the Hindus you have made absolutely no progress ; but you are just at the same point where you were on the first day when you set foot in India.” (“The Times”, 29. Sept. 1858.) On the other hand Christian missionaries have done useful and praiseworthy work in other ways ; some of them have furnished us with excellent and thorough reports on Brahmanism and Buddhism and faithful, careful translations of sacred books, which would not have been possible without the “con amore”.<sup>2</sup>

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The basic character of Judaism is realism and optimism, which are closely related and are the conditions of pure theism ; as the latter claims that the material world is absolutely real and that life is an agree-

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<sup>2</sup> At the end of this Essay, Schopenhauer expresses the hope that the Japhetic peoples of Europe will return to the religion of their original home, because “ after long wanderings, they have again become ripe for it.”—ED.

able gift bestowed on us. The basic character of Brahmanism and Buddhism, on the other hand, is idealism and pessimism; as they admit only a dreamlike existence of the world, and regard life as a consequence of our guilt. In the doctrine of the Zend Avesta, in which Judaism originated, the pessimistic element was still represented by Ahriman. In Judaism, however, the latter plays only a subordinate part, as Satan—who, like Ahriman, is also the originator of serpents, scorpions and insects. Judaism immediately uses him to correct its fundamental optimistic error, i. e. for the fall of man, which now introduces into that religion the pessimistic element to satisfy the most obvious experiences of life, and that is its most correct fundamental idea; although it transfers into the course of existence that which ought to be represented as its cause and thus previous to it.

A striking confirmation that Jehovah is Ormuzd is furnished by the first Book of Ezra in the Septuagint, omitted in Luther's version: "Cyrus, the king, caused the house of the Lord to be built in Jerusalem, where sacrifices are made to Him by the everlasting fire."—Moreover, the Second Book of the Maccabees, Chapters 1 and 2, also Chapter 13, 8, proves that the religion of the Jews was that of the Persians, as it is related that the Jews who were led into Babylonian captivity under Nehemia's leadership, previously concealed the sacred fire in a dried-out cistern, where it was flooded by water, but later rekindled by a miracle, much to the edification of the Persian king. The Persians as

well as the Jews had a horror of image worship, hence did not represent the gods pictorially. As Jehovah is a transformation of Ormuzd, thus the corresponding transformation of Ahriman is S a t a n, i. e. the adversary, that is, of Ormuzd. ( Luther has a d v e r s a r y, where the Septuagint has " S a t a n ", e. g. I. Kings 11, 23. It appears that the Jehovah cult arose under Josias with the help of Hilkias, i. e. was adopted from the Parsees, and completed by Ezra on the return from the Babylonian captivity. For down to Josias and Hilkias it is evident that natural religion, Sabaism, worship of Belus, Astarte, and others, prevailed in Judaea, even under Solomon. See the books of Kings on Josias and Hilkias. )<sup>3</sup>—It may be mentioned casually here, by way of confirmation of the origin of Judaism in the Zend religion, that according to the Old Testament and other Jewish authorities, the cherubim are bull-headed creatures on which Jehovah rides. Such beasts, half-bull, half-man, also half-lion, very similar to the description in Ezekiel, Chapters 1 and 10, are also to be found on the sculptures in Persepolis, but especially among the Assyrian statues discovered in Mosul and Nimrud, and in Vienna there is

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<sup>3</sup> Can the otherwise inexplicable mercy which ( according to Ezra ) Cyrus and Darius show the Jews, whose temple they cause to be rebuilt, perhaps, be due to the fact that the Jews, who had up to then worshipped Baal, Astarte, Moloch etc., adopted the Zoroastrian faith in Babylon after the victory of the Persians, and now served Ormuzd under the name of Jehovah? This would account, too, for the fact ( which would otherwise be absurd ) that Cyrus prays to the God of Israel.

even a carved stone which presents Ormuzd riding on an ox-cherub of this kind: for details hereon see "Wiener Jahrbücher der Literatur," September 1833, review of "Persian Travels". This origin has been treated in detail by J. G. Rhode, in his book "The Sacred Legend of the Zend people". All this throws light on the genealogy of Jehovah.

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The New Testament, on the other hand, must somehow be of Indian origin: evidence of this is its essentially Indian ethics, carrying morality into asceticism, its pessimism and its avatar. But it is precisely due to this that there is a decided, inner contradiction between it and the Old Testament; the story of the fall of man being the only connecting-link to which it could be attached. For when that Indian doctrine set foot on the soil of the Promised Land, there arose the problem of combining the knowledge of the corruption and misery of the world, its need of release and salvation by an avatar, the moral of self-denial and penance—with Jewish monotheism and its "Behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1, 1). And it worked, fairly well, as well as two so entirely heterogeneous, indeed contrary, doctrines could be combined.

As an ivy shoot, since it requires support and stay, clings around a roughly hewn post, everywhere adapting itself to its deformity, reproducing it, but clothes it with its life and charm, in the same way the doctrine of Christ which has sprung from Indian wisdom has clothed the

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ancient stem of crude Judaism which is quiet heterogeneous to it, and that part of its basic character which had to be retained, is now transformed by it into something quite different, something living and true; it seems the same, but is a totally different thing.

The Creator out of nothing, who is separated from the world, is now identified with the Saviour and through him with humanity. This Saviour is now the representative of mankind, which is saved through him, after it had fallen in Adam and since then lay ensnared in the bonds of sin, of corruption, suffering and death. For here, as in Buddhism, the world is seen as all this;—no longer in the light of Jewish optimism, which had found “everything very good”: rather is the devil himself now called “prince of this world,”—( St. John 12,32, literally “ruler of the world.” ) The world is no longer the end, but the means: the realm of eternal joys lies beyond it and death. Renunciation in this world and concentration of all hope on a better world, is the spirit of Christianity. But the way thither is paved by atonement, i. e. release from the world and its ways. In morality the right of retaliation has been replaced by the command to love one’s enemies, the promise of numerous progeny by the promise of eternal life, and the visitation of the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the fourth generation by the Holy Ghost, which overshadows everything.

Thus we see the doctrines of the Old Testament rectified and reinterpreted by those of the New Testament,

whereby an inner agreement with the ancient religions of India in what is essential, is effected. All that is true in Christianity is also to be found in Brahmanism and Buddhism. But the Jewish view of an animated 'nothingness, a temporal creation, which cannot be humbly thankful enough, nor praise Jehovah sufficiently for an ephemeral existence full of wretchedness, fear and distress,—will be sought in vain in Hinduism and Buddhism. The spirit of Indian wisdom can be traced in the New Testament like the scent of flowers wafted hither from distant tropical regions, over hills and rivers. In the Old Testament, on the other hand, there is nothing to correspond to Indian wisdom, except the fall of man which had to be immediately added as a corrective to optimistic theism, and which was the only point at which the New Testament could be connected with the Old.

. Now, just as for a thorough knowledge of a species, that of its genus is required, the latter, however, only being recognised in its various species, even so, for a thorough understanding of Christianity, a knowledge of the other two world-renouncing religions, Brahmanism and Buddhism, is necessary, indeed a solid knowledge with as much detail as possible. For just as primarily Sanskrit affords us a really thorough understanding of the Greek and Latin languages, so do Brahmanism and Buddhism throw light on Christianity.

It is indeed my hope that there will one day be Bible scholars well versed in the Indian religions, who

## MISCELLANEOUS APHORISMS

( From various works )

The cheapest kind of pride is national pride. For it betrays in him who is afflicted with it the lack of individual qualities, of which he might be proud, because he would otherwise not boast of what he shares with so many millions. Whoever has considerable personal qualities, will rather recognise most clearly the faults of his own nation, as he sees them constantly before him. Every miserable wretch, on the other hand, who has nothing in the world to be proud of, snatches at the last means, i. e. to be proud of the nation to which he happens to belong : this is a recreation for him, and he is then gratefully prepared to defend wholesale all failings and follies pertaining to his nation.—As a matter of fact individuality by far surpasses nationality, and in a given person the former deserves a thousand times more consideration than the latter. Not much good can ever be said for national character, as it speaks of the crowd. It is rather that human stupidity, perversity and badness appear in a different form in every country, and these are called national character. Disgusted by one of them, we praise another, until we have had the same experience with that.—Each nation mocks at the other, and all of them are right.—

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*Arthur Schopenhauer*

Sex honour seems to me to demand a more detailed investigation and its principles should be traced back to the roots; this investigation will at the same time show that all honour is in the last analysis based upon utilitarian considerations. Sex honour, in accordance with its nature, falls under the two heads of women's honour and men's honour, and on both sides there is a well understood *esprit de corps*. The former is by far the more important of the two: because in the life of the woman the sex relationship is the principal thing.—The honour of women is thus the general opinion of a girl, that she has not given herself to any man, and of a married woman that she has belonged only to the one man to whom she is wedded. The importance of this opinion is based on the following. The female sex demands and expects from the male all that it desires and needs: the male sex demands chiefly and immediately only one thing from the female. Hence the arrangement had to be made that the male sex could obtain that one thing from the female only by undertaking to provide for everything and also for the children springing from the union: it is on this arrangement that the welfare of the entire female sex is based. In order to carry it into effect, the female sex must of necessity be united and show *esprit de corps*. But then, as a solid body and with serried ranks they confront the entire male sex, which by the superiority of its physical and mental powers is in possession of all earthly goods, as their common enemy who must be attacked and conquered, in

order by their possession to gain possession of the earthly goods. Thus it is with this end in view that the maxim of honour of the entire female sex, is that all illicit cohabitation shall positively be denied to the male sex; so that every single man shall be forced into marriage, which is, as it were, a capitulation, whereby the entire female sex shall be provided for. This end can, however, only be attained completely if the above maxims are strictly observed: hence the entire female sex watches, with true esprit de corps, over their observance among all its members. Accordingly, every girl who through illicit cohabitation, has betrayed the whole of the female sex, because its welfare would be undermined by any generalising of such conduct, is ostracized from her sex and disgraced: she has lost her honour. No woman is to have any further dealings with her: she is avoided as if she were plague-stricken. The same fate awaits the adulteress; because she has not kept to the capitulation to which the husband had agreed, and by such an example men are deterred from entering into the said capitulation; whilst it is on the last-named that the welfare of the entire female sex is based. Moreover the adulteress, owing to the crude breach of faith and the deception in her action, loses her civil honour as well as her sex honour. For this reason one may say in an extenuatory tone "a fallen girl", but never "a fallen married woman", and the seducer can make the former honest again by marriage; not thus can the adulterer restore the honour of the latter, after she has been divorced.—If, in conse-

*Arthur Schopenhauer*

quence of this clear understanding, we now recognise an *esprit de corps*, which though salutary, indeed necessary, is well calculated and based on self-interest, as the foundation of the principle of female honour ; then we shall not be able to attribute to this latter, highly important though it is for female existence, more than a great relative value, but certainly not an absolute value which transcends life and its purposes, and which should hence be purchased at the cost of life itself. Accordingly we can in no wise applaud the exaggerated deeds of Lucretia and Virginius which led to tragic farces.—

Such exaggeration of the principle of female honour, like so much else, is a case of forgetting the end over the means : for through such overstraining, an absolute value is falsely attributed to sex honour,—which, even more than all other kinds of honour, has only a relative value ; we might even say a merely conventional one, when we learn from “ *Thomasius de concubinatu* ” how in almost all countries and times down to the Lutheran Reformation concubinage was a legally permitted and recognised relationship, wherein the concubine remained honest ; to say nothing of Mylitta in Babylon (*Herodotus i, 199*).

In any case, however, the numerous bloody sacrifices that have been made to the principle of woman's honour—infanticide and suicide of the mothers, are evidence of the not purely natural origin of this principle. It is true that a girl who gives herself illicitly, is thereby guilty of faithlessness to the whole of her sex ; yet this

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faith has been assumed only tacitly and not on oath. And as, in the usual case, it is her own advantage which suffers from it most directly, her folly is infinitely greater than her badness.

Men's sex honour is called forth by that of the women, as the opposing esprit de corps which demands that each man who has entered into marriage, that capitulation which is so very favourable to the opposite side, shall now see to it that the terms are kept by his partner ; lest even this pact, through the prevalence of a lax observance thereof, lose its firmness, and men, whilst they have to give everything, would not even be assured of that one thing which they acquire by that bargain, namely sole possession of woman. Accordingly man's honour demands that he shall revenge adultery of his wife, and punish it at least by separation from her. If he tolerates it knowingly, he is disgraced in the eyes of the community of men : this disgrace is, however, not nearly as thorough as that pertaining to a woman's loss of sex honour, but only a "levioris notae macula," because in man the sex relationship is subordinate, as he has many other and more important relationships. The two great dramatic poets of modern times, each twice, have taken this honour of men as their theme : Shakespeare in "Othello" and "A Winter's Tale," and Calderon in "El medico de su honra" (The physician of his honour) and "A secreto agravio secreta venganza" .(Secret revenge for secret shame). Moreover this honour demands the punishment of the woman only, not that of her partner ; which is

*Arthur Schopenhauer*

merely an opus supererogationis: this confirms its origin in the esprit de corps of the men.

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The difference between serfdom and landlordism, and generally between the serf and the farmer, tenants, mortgagors etc. lies in the form rather than the matter. Whether the farmer belongs to me, or the land on which he must live; the bird, or its food; the fruit or the tree; matters very little; as Shakespeare lets Shylock say:

“ You take my life,

When you do take the means whereby I live. ”

The free farmer, it is true, has the advantage of being able to go away, out into the great world; whereas the serf and glebae adscriptus' has the perhaps greater advantage of having a master who is bound to provide for him when failure of crops, sickness, old age and incapacity render him helpless; that is why he sleeps peacefully, whilst when crops fail, his master tosses on his sleepless bed thinking of ways and means to procure bread for his serf.—

Thus poverty and slavery are only two forms of, one might almost say two names for, the same thing.

And thus chiefly arises all that evil which, either by the name of slavery or that of the proletariat, has always weighed down the great majority of the human race.

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The German scholar is too poor to be sincere and

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honest. Hence turning, twisting, accommodating himself and denying his conviction, teaching and writing what he does not believe, crawling, flattering, forming coteries and friendships, respecting ministers, highly placed men, colleagues, students, booksellers, reviewers, in short, anything rather than truth and the merit of others—is his custom and his method. Generally he becomes a considerate rascal thereby. Consequently, in German literature in general and German philosophy in particular, dishonesty has become so overwhelming that it is to be hoped it will reach such a point that, incapable of deceiving any more people, it will neutralise itself.

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What a greenhorn is he who imagines that to show mind and intellect would be a means of becoming a favourite in society ! Rather do they arouse among the vast majority hate and resentment which are all the more bitter because he who feels them is not able to accuse the cause, indeed conceals it from himself. The exact procedure is this: if a man perceives and feels great intellectual superiority in him with whom he speaks, he concludes, in secret and without being clearly conscious of it; that, in like measure the other perceives and feels his inferiority and narrowness. This enthymeme arouses his bitterest hate, resentment and rage.—

To disclose mind and intellect is only an indirect way of showing others their incapacity and stupidity. Moreover, common nature is agitated at the sight of its opposite, and the secret instigator of that agitation is

envy. For, as can be seen daily, the gratification of their vanity is what people enjoy above all else, and this is only possible by comparing themselves with others. Now there are no qualities on which man prides himself so much as on intellectual ones: for it is on these alone that his preeminence over the animals rests. To hold definite superiority in this respect before him, especially before witnesses, is thus the greatest audacity. He feels himself challenged to revenge thereby, and will usually seek an opportunity of carrying it out by insult; whereby he would proceed from the realm of intelligence to that of will, wherein in this respect, we are all equal. Thus, whilst in society standing and wealth may ever count on respect, intellectual qualities can in no wise expect such: in the best case they are ignored; but usually they are regarded as a kind of impertinence or as something which their possessor has acquired by forbidden means and now has the impudence to flaunt; wherefore each one in secret intends to confer some humiliation or other on him and only waits for a suitable opportunity to do so. Scarcely will even the humblest bearing succeed in being forgiven for intellectual superiority. Sadi says in "Gulistan": "Know that there is a hundred times more repugnance in the foolish man against the wise, than the aversion felt by the wise man to the foolish."—Intellectual inferiority, on the other hand, is a real recommendation. For, as warmth is to the body, so is the comforting feeling of superiority to the mind; hence, just as instinctively as he approaches the stove or the sun-

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shine, does each one go near the object which provides him with it.

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No greater mistake can be made than to suppose that the latest word on a subject is always the more correct ; that what is written later is an improvement on what was written previously ; and that every change means progress. Men who think and have correct judgment, and people who treat their subject earnestly, are all only exceptions. Vermin is the rule everywhere in the world : it is always at hand and busily engaged in trying to improve in its own way upon the mature deliberations of the thinkers. So that if a man wishes to improve himself in any subject he must guard against immediately seizing the newest books written upon it, assuming that science is always advancing and that the older books have been utilised in the compiling of the new. They have, it is true, been utilised ; but how ? The writer often does not thoroughly understand the old books ; he will, at the same time, not use their exact words, so that the result is he spoils and bungles what has been said before in a much better and clearer way by the old writers ; since they wrote from their own lively knowledge of the subject. He often leaves out the best things they have written, their most striking elucidations of the matter, their happiest remarks, because he does not recognise their value or feel how pregnant they are. It is only what is stupid and shallow that appeals to him.

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*Arthur Schopenhauer*

A thought only really lives until it has reached the boundary-line of words ; it then becomes petrified and is immediately dead ; and yet it is everlasting, like the fossilised animals and plants of former ages. Its existence, which is really momentary, may be compared to a crystal the instant it becomes crystallised.

As soon as a thought has found words it no longer exists in us or is serious in its deepest sense.

When it begins to exist for others it ceases to live in us ; just as a child frees itself from its mother when it comes into existence. The poet has also said :

“ Who speaks, already errs. ”

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The great delight we take in the contemplation of animals is due to the fact that in them we see our own existence very much *simplified*.

There is only one untruthful creature in the world—man. Every other creature is true and genuine, showing itself as it is, and expressing itself just as it feels. An emblematic or allegorical expression of this fundamental difference is to be found in the fact that all animals go about in their natural state ; this contributes much to the joyful impression they make on us when we look at them ; my heart always rejoices, especially if they are free animals. Man, on the other hand, by his stupid clothes becomes a monster ; the very sight of him is offensive, enhanced by the whiteness of his skin which is not natural to him, and the nauseating consequences of his unnatural habit of eating meat, drinking alcohol, smoking, of

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dissoluteness, and ailments. He is a blot on Nature! It was because the Greeks felt this, that they restricted themselves as far as possible in the matter of dress.

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As a rule, people of very great capacities will get on better with people of extremely limited intelligence than with those of ordinary intelligence; just as the despot and the plebeians, the grandparents and the grandchildren, are natural allies.

# FERDINAND FREILIGRATH

( 1810-1876 )



*German poet. Only his political fighting poems, written at the time of his connection with Karl Marx, are still readable today. Also exotic poems in the style of Victor Hugo.—Freiligrath lived as a political refugee in London.*

## FAREWELL OF THE "NEUE RHEINISCHE ZEITUNG"<sup>1</sup>

No open blow in an open fight—

But with quips and with quirks they arraign me,  
By creeping treachery's secret blight

The western Calmucks have slain me.

The fatal shaft in the dark did fly ;

I was struck by an ambushed knave ;  
And here in the pride of my strength I lie,

Like the corse of a rebel knave !

With a deathless scorn in my dying breath ;

In my hand the sword still cherished ;

"Rebellion!" still for my shout of death,

In my manhood untainted I perished.

Oh ! gladly, full gladly the Pruss and the Czar,

The grass from my grave would clear ;

But Germany sends me, with Hungary far,

Three salvoes to honour my bier.

And the tattered poor man takes his stand,

On my head the cold sods heaving ;

He casts them down with a diligent hand,

Where the glory of toil is cleaving.

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<sup>1</sup> Freiligrath was a collaborator of the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung" which was published by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. The publication was suspended by the Censor. This poem was published on the front page of the last issue, on 10th May, 1849.—ED.

*Ferdinand Freiligrath*

And a garland of flowers and May he brought  
On my burning wounds to cast ;  
His wife and his daughters the wreath had wrought,  
When the work of the day was past.

Farewell ! farewell ! thou turbulent life !  
Farewell to ye ! armies engaging !  
Farewell ! cloud canopied fields of strife !  
Where the greatness of war is raging !  
Farewell ! but not for ever farewell !  
They can *not* kill the spirit, my brother !  
In thunder I'll rise on the field where I fell,  
More boldly to fight out another.

When the last of crowns like glass shall break,  
On the scene our sorrows have haunted,  
And the People that last dread " guilty " shall speak,  
By your side ye shall find me undaunted.  
On Rhine, or on Danube, in word and deed,  
• You shall witness, true to his vow,  
On the wrecks of thrones, in the midst of the freed,  
• The rebel who greets you now !

( English by Ernest Jones )

## REVOLUTION

(1851)

And tho' ye caught your noble prey within your  
hangman's sordid thrall,  
And tho' your captive was led forth beneath your city's  
rampart wall;  
And tho' the grass lies o'er her green, where at the  
morning's early red  
The peasant girl brings funeral wreaths—I tell you still,  
she is not dead!

And tho' from off the lofty brow ye cut the ringlets  
flowing long,  
And tho' ye mated her amid the thieves and murderers'  
hideous throng,  
And tho' ye gave her felon fare—bade felon garb her  
livery be,  
And tho' ye set the oakum-task—I tell you all, she still  
is free!

And tho' compelled to banishment, ye hunt her down  
thro' endless lands;  
And tho' she seeks a foreign hearth, and silent 'mid its  
ashes stands;  
And tho' she bathes her wounded feet, where foreign  
streams seek foreign seas,  
Yet—yet—she never more will hang her harp on Babel's  
willow trees!

Ferdinand Freiligrath

Oh, no ! the song those waters hear is not of sorrow, nor  
dismay--  
'Tis triumph-song--victorious song--the paean of the  
future's day--  
The future--distant now no more--her prophet voice is  
sounding free,  
As well as once your Godhead spake: --*I was, I am, and*  
*I will be!*

Will be - and lead the nations on the last of all your  
hosts to meet,  
And on your necks, your heads, your crowns, I'll plant  
my strong, resistless feet !

## *Germans beyond Germany*

I stretch forth my almighty arm, till it revivifies the world.

Ye see me only in your cells; ye see me only in the  
grave;

Ye see me only wandering lone, beside the exile's sullen  
wave:-

Rests not a nook for me to dwell in every heart and  
every brain?—

In every brow that boldly thinks, erect with manhood's  
honest pride—

Does not each bosom shelter me that beats with honour's  
generous tide?

Ha! Am I not the Breath of Life, that pants and  
struggles for relief?

'Tis *therefore* I will be—and lead the peoples yet your hosts to meet,

It is no boast—it is no threat—thus History's iron law  
decrees—

The day grows hot—oh Babylon ! 'Tis cool beneath thy  
willow trees !

( English by Ernest Jones )

## ON THE DEATH OF JOHANNA KINKEL.<sup>1</sup>

(20th November 1858)

In silence on a winter's day,  
We exiles stood around,  
A German woman's head to lay  
In England's alien ground.  
Hoarfrost was on the hedges ; still  
The sun was shining there ;  
Blue rose the distant Surrey hill  
Against the far blue air.

On boughs of juniper and broom  
Swang chirping many a bird,  
While many a brow was dark with gloom,  
And stifled sobs were heard.  
One friendly hand, in trembling dread,  
A last sad homage paid,  
Upon the bier a ribbon red,  
And wreath of laurel laid.

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Gottfried Kinkel was a professor of the History of Art in Bonn. He took part in the rising in Baden, and was wounded. He was condemned to death, but at the urgent entreaty of Bettina v. Arnim his sentence was commuted to lifelong imprisonment, which term was to be served in Spandau. His wife, the authoress Johanna Kinkel, whom he had married in 1843, and his former pupil Karl Schurz got him out of prison in November 1850. Kinkel fled to London, where he became teacher of the German language at Westbourne College. In 1866 he went to Zurich as professor of the History of Art, and died there in 1882. The sudden death of Johanna Kinkel was a great shock to Freiligrath.—ED.

*Germans beyond Germany*

In earnest life, in cheerful song,  
She noblest teaching gave,  
To the bewildered orphan throng,  
Now by the open graye.  
Calm were the words the father spoke,  
As near his children pressed,  
Yet, as if life-blood welled and broke,  
From out his wounded breast.

Rest then beneath these tranquil skies,  
And we will never weep,  
That here no Drachenfels doth rise,  
Nor Oelberg's craggy steep !  
That on thy grave no dew-drops gleam,  
Nor twilight rays can shine  
Where through the plain thy native stream  
Rolls on to meet the Rhine.

Like soldiers in a fight we stand  
To lay a comrade low,  
As if upon this foreign land  
Shot by some cruel foe.  
Our exile is a battle-field,  
And thou the first to fall;  
We have our cause, we cannot yield,  
One hope, one aim, for all !

In England where the wild flowers bloom,  
Thy honoured place shall be ;  
No land can claim to hold thy tomb  
With dearer right than she !

*Ferdinand Freiligrath*

Rest here then ; rest where thou hast died ;  
Where thou hast striven, — rest ;—  
In British ground, our greatest pride . . .  
Shall love to know thee best.

These leaves are stirred by the same air,  
It blows these grasses through,  
The same that played with Milton's hair,  
Poet and rebel too : . . .  
And Cromwell's banners have been stirred  
On the same breeze to fly,  
And this same quiet spot has heard  
His horses tramping by.

And to the self-same shining skies  
Whose light was dear to him,  
The patriot Sidney raised his eyes . . .  
With grief and anguish dim.  
And often on that hill we see,  
Did tearful glances fall  
From Russell's wife who was like thee,  
Her captive husband's all. •

This land we know is still their own,  
These first, these noble Four ;  
So when we leave thee here alone,  
They shall watch by thy door !  
And those who to thy Spirit gave  
Aid, strength and aim so long,  
They also shall wait near thy grave,  
Freedom, and Love, and Song !

*Germans beyond Germany*

Farewell ! Since round thy grave should ring  
    Music's melodious sound,  
The earliest larks shall near it sing,  
    Scattering sweet notes around ;  
And the sea-breeze shall whisper near,  
    The breeze that loves the free,  
And dry--when pilgrims mourn thee here--  
    The tears they shed for thee !

( English by Adelaide Anne Procter )

## THE EMIGRANTS

( 1832 )

I cannot take my eyes away  
From you, ye busy, bustling band,  
Your little all to see you lay  
Each in the waiting boatman's hand.

Ye men, that from your necks set down  
Your heavy baskets on the earth,  
Of bread, from German corn baked brown,  
By German wives, on German hearth.

And you, with braided tresses neat,  
Black Forest maidens, slim and brown,  
How careful, on the sloop's green seat,  
You set your pails and pitchers down.

Ah ! oft have home's cool shady tanks  
Those pails and pitchers filled for you ;  
By far Missouri's silent banks  
Shall these the scenes of home renew,  
The stone-rimmed fount, in village street,  
Where oft ye stooped to chat and draw,—  
The hearth, and each familiar seat,  
The pictured tiles your childhood saw.

Soon, in the far and wooded West  
Shall log-house walls therewith be graced ;  
Soon, many a tired, tawny guest  
Shall sweet refreshment from them taste.

*Germans beyond Germany*

From them shall drink the Cherokee,  
Faint with the hot and dusty chase ;  
No more from German vintage, ye  
Shall bear them home, in leaf-crowned grace.

Oh say, why seek ye other lands ?  
The Neckar's vale hath wine and corn :  
Full of dark firs the Schwarzwald stands :  
In Spessart rings the Alp-herd's horn.

Ah, in strange forests you will yearn  
For the green mountains of your home,--  
To Deutschland's yellow wheat-fields turn,--  
In spirit o'er her vine-hills roam.

How will the form of days grown pale  
In golden dreams float softly by,  
Like some old legendary tale,  
Before fond memory's moistened eye !

The boatman calls,—go hence in peace !  
God bless you, wife and child, and sire !  
Bless all your fields with rich increase,  
And crown each faithful heart's desire !

( English by C. T. Brooks

## THE DEATH OF THE LEADER

“ From the sails the fog is dripping,  
O'er the bay the mist doth fly ;  
Light the lantern at the mast-head,  
Dull the water—dull the sky :  
Funeral weather ! Heads uncover ! ”  
Wives and children, young and old  
Come and pray, for in the cabin  
You a dead man shall behold.”

And the German peasants follow . . .  
Their New-England Captain's tread ;  
In the lowly cabin entering  
With a sad and drooping head . . .  
They, who for a home, a new one,  
Crossed the ocean vast and grey,  
In his shroud they see the old man  
Who has led them till today.

Who, from boards of fir and pinewood,  
Built a hut that floated free . . .  
From the Neckar to the Rhinestream,  
From the Rhine down to the sea.  
Who, whitehaired and heavy-hearted,  
Sadly left his fathers' land,  
Saying : “ Let us rise and wander  
Let us make a covenant ;—

*Germans beyond Germany*

"Let us all break up towards Evening,  
Westward doth our Dawn flush bright ;  
Over yonder let us settle,  
There where Freedom holds her right ;  
There we'll sow our sweat in furrows  
Where 'tis not an idle seed,  
There we'll till the soil, where each one  
That has ploughed, shall earn his meed.

"Let us carry, each his homestead,  
Far into the forests dark,  
Let me be in the Savannahs,  
Let me be your Patriarch !  
Let us live, as lived the shepherds  
In the Bible's olden lay,  
And our journey's fiery pillar  
Be the light that burns for aye.

"On this light I place reliance,  
It will never guide us wrong,  
In my grandsons, I view proudly  
Future generations strong ;  
True ! -- I once had hoped my country  
Would receive my weary dust,  
For my children's sake I grasp yet  
Scrip and staff with hopeful trust.

"Up then ! And from Goshen follow  
Yon bright pioneering star ! " -  
Ah, he viewed, a second Moses,  
Canaan only from afar !

*Ferdinand Freiligrath*

He has died upon the ocean,  
Both he and his wishes cease,  
Disappointment or Fulfilment  
Cannot now disturb his peace.

Orphaned now the band, about to  
Sink their leader in the deep ;  
Awe ! the little children hide them,  
Silently their mothers weep ;  
And the men with anxious bosom  
Gaze upon the distant shore  
Where this pious one—ah, never !  
At their side shall wander more.

“ From the sails the mist is dripping,  
Fog hangs heavy o'er the wave,  
Pray ye !—Let the ropes be slackened,  
Give him to his watery grave.”  
Tears are shedding, billows foaming,  
Sea-gulls flit with angry cry.  
He who tilled the earth his lifelong  
In the sea doth calmly lie.

( English by the Poet's daughter



# FERDINAND LASSALLE

( 1825-1864 )



· German politician and organiser of the Labour Party, one of the best political speakers Germany has ever produced; the real founder of German social democracy, frequently brutally slandered by Karl Marx in his letters to Engels on account of his somewhat snobbish mode of life à la Lord Byron and his gallant adventures with aristocratic ladies, to which he finally succumbed in a duel. For some time Bismarck negotiated very earnestly with Lassalle in his attempt to win over the German Labour movement as his own ally in his fight against bourgeois liberalism. Principal literary work: a book about "Heraklitus the Dark", in which Lassalle interprets the profound Greek thinker in the sense of Hegel's dialectical philosophy.

# AGAINST NEWSPAPERS AND JOURNALISM

(Speech 1863)

I cannot give you here the history of the European Press. Enough, once it was really the champion of intellectual interests in politics, art and science, the moulder, teacher and intellectual instructor of the great public. It fought for ideas and sought to raise the masses up to these. Gradually, however, the habit of paid announcements, the so-called advertisements, which for a long time had occupied no space, then a very limited space on the last page of newspapers, began to bring about a thorough change in the nature of newspapers. It was seen that these advertisements were a very effective way of amassing wealth, of drawing immense yearly revenues from newspapers. Ever since then a newspaper became an extremely lucrative speculation for a capitalist or for a publisher hungry for capital. But in order to secure many advertisements it was first of all necessary to obtain as many subscribers as possible, for naturally the advertisements only pour in to such papers as enjoy a wide circulation. Ever since then it was therefore no longer a question of fighting for a great idea and raising the great public slowly and gradually up to it, but on the contrary, to do homage to such opinions

Ferdinand Lassalle

as, whatever their nature, are agreeable *to the greatest number of newspaper buyers*. Thus, ever since then, while still maintaining the pretence of being champions of intellectual interests, the newspapers became, not moulders and teachers of the people, but vile eye-servants of the moneyed and therefore subscribing bourgeoisie and their taste, some newspapers fettered by the circle of subscribers they already have, the others by that which they hope to acquire, both always with an eye to the real golden basis of the business, the advertisements.

Thus, ever since then, not only did the newspapers become quite an ordinary, sordid money business like any other, but much worse still, they became an out-and-out hypocritical business, which is carried on with the pretence of being a fight for great ideas and for the good of the people.

Have you any idea of the depraving effect that this daily continued hypocrisy, this Jesuitism of the 19th century, of necessity gradually produced on publishers and journalists?

At a period of heated political party struggles, however, other and very different effects were produced too. From the outset the newspapers could not, of course, represent anything in this fight except the prejudices of the moneyed classes among which the great majority of the subscribers are, who again attract the advertisements. But that is the least thing. A still more pernicious consequence was the following: an author

of honour would chop off his hand rather than say the opposite of what he thinks: indeed, moreover, rather than not say what he thinks. If it is absolutely impossible for him to express it by any means, then he prefers to retire and *not* write at all. In the case of newspapers this is out of the question owing to the lucrative newspaper business. They have to go on appearing, that is the nature of the business! Thus whatever our governments since 1848 might do, the newspapers were from the outset bound by their business to make any compromise with the government, and to oppose it only in such a way as the government itself still wanted or permitted! That is the nature of the business! From this there originated since 1848 a series of the most outrageous compromises of our papers with the government. Matters which were too sore points for the government, were not touched upon at all; matters which were touched upon, were touched only as far as the government cared to tolerate such touching. Indeed, under the minister Hinkeldey-Westfalen a sort of people who, thanks to their position, were to report to the newspapers on which points and up to which limit the government would tolerate opposition or not, were often secretly kept by the Press. Oh, you will be astonished, when the moment shall have come to make all the disclosures which history will one day have to record about this!

But even that is not enough! The whole series of these personal concessions which the journalists made to

*Ferdinand Lassalle*

the government purely for the sake of their business, the journalists could not, of course, admit them as such purely personal concessions made for the sake of the business, because otherwise the contempt of the people, the loss of readers, subscribers, and advertisements would have been the inevitable result.

So there was no alternative but to demonstrate and force on the people these purely commercial concessions as so many new standpoints of the general intellect, to present them as developments and salutary compromises of the life of the people, and thus to emasculate and dilute the mind of the people to that point which was necessary for the continuance of the lucrative newspaper business! Hence that retrogression of the mind of the people in all spheres of public life since 1848.

At the same time you can imagine for yourselves what demoralising consequences the process which has been described necessarily continued to bring about daily on the character of the journalists, what a frivolous self-contempt, contempt for all ideal purposes, for readers and the people, who patiently swallowed that humbug, were the necessary result of that daily habit of self-debasement.

If, for instance, it were to occur to our government to order: No newspaper is to appear henceforth which does not bear in letters as large as fingers the headline: "The people are *Canaille*," then, there is no shadow of a doubt--for that is the nature of the business!--, that our

liberal papers would appear with the headline "The People are Canaille!" in letters as large as fingers! Not only that, but they would now also prove to us that to say "The people are canaille!" is precisely the acme of moral earnestness and true love for the people, that it is the *necessary new compromise* of the public intellect.

If anyone wants to make money, let him manufacture cotton or cloth or speculate on the Stock Exchange. But to poison all the wells of the mind of the people, and serve out spiritual death to the people every day out of a thousand tubes, for the sake of vile gain,—that is the greatest crime that I can grasp! But think, too, of the necessary reaction which the work of the newspapers which has just been described, must effect on the disposition of the journalists themselves. You know, as the worker influences the work, thus too, reciprocally, the work to a great extent determines the disposition of the worker. The lucrative advertisement business has given the newspaper proprietors the means to maintain an intellectual proletariat, a standing army of journalists, by means of which, in competition, they strive to extend their business and increase their takings from advertisements! But what man who has any self-respect, who feels within himself any capacity at all for real achievements in the realm of science, thought or civil life, would be willing to join this army? You, O proletarians, only sell your employers your time and material work. They, however, sell their souls! For the correspondent must write as the editor and the proprietor

*Ferdinand Lassalle*

want ; and the editor and the proprietor, what the subscribers want and the government allows ! But who, who is a man, would lend himself to such a prostitution of the mind ? Then too, think of the shattering consequences of this mercantile occupation in other respects also. You, O proletarians, only sell yourselves to a business that you know and understand, but they, the intellectual proletarians, must daily fill long columns about a thousand things, politics, law, economics, science, all branches of legislation, and the diplomatic and historical relations of all peoples. Whether they have a sufficient knowledge of the subject, or whether they understand anything or nothing about it—the matter must be treated, the newspaper must be filled, that is the nature of the business ! Added to that, the lack of time to study things in greater detail, to look up sources and books, even to concentrate and collect one's thoughts to some extent. The article must be ready, that is the nature of the business ! All ignorance, all lack of acquaintance with things, all, all must be concealed as far as possible under the cunning routine phrase.

That is why whoever today, with half an education, enters upon the journalist's career, has in two or three years forgotten even the little he knew, ruined himself intellectually and morally, become blasé, a man without seriousness, no longer believing in or striving after anything great, only swearing by the power of the clique !

Owing to all these causes it has come about that all the efficient elements which formerly had an interest

in the Press, have gradually withdrawn from it with some very isolated exceptions, and thus the Press has become a rallying-point of every kind of mediocrity, of all ruined existences, all shirkers and ignoramuses, who, incapable of real work, still find in the Press a less strenuous and more remunerative living than anywhere else.

These are the modern mercenaries of the pen, the intellectual proletariat, the standing army of journalists, which creates public opinion and has inflicted deeper wounds on the people than the standing army of soldiers; for the latter keeps the people down only by external force, but the former brings them inner rot, poisons their blood and their sap!—Hence, too the distance, as if in wholesome dread, at which, among us, all men of real knowledge keep themselves from the newspapers. I am acquainted with a fairly wide circle of scholars. How often after a chance remark as to whether an article on this or that especially important subject should not be sent to some one of the newspapers, did I receive an answer full of surprise and wonder, as if my remark contained an almost insulting imputation!

I have also in my life been closely acquainted with two or three journalists, who are in every respect notable exceptions, indeed afford a complete contrast to the description that has just been given. Two of them have already retired from this career; but how often all three of them cried out to me in painful struggle: Better to be a railway workman than continue in this career which ruins our minds and souls!

*Ferdinand Lassalle*

I have shown you that the corruption of the Press was the inevitable outcome of the fact that, under pretence of fighting for intellectual interests, it became an industrial money speculation through the advertisement system. It is therefore simply a question of separating these two things which, indeed, have nothing to do with each other. In as far as the Press represents intellectual interests, it is comparable to the elementary school teacher or the preacher ; in as far as it publishes announcements; it is the public crier, the public trumpeter, which with a hundred thousand voices informs the public where a watch-chain was lost, where the best tobacco, where Thompson's malt extract is to be had. What has the preacher to do with the public trumpeter, and is it not monstrous to combine these two things ?

Hold fast, with an ardent soul, to the watchword that I hurl at you : Hate and contempt, death and downfall to the Press of today ! That is a bold watchword, given by one man against the thousand-armed institute of newspapers, with which even kings have already fought in vain. But as truly as you listen passionately and eagerly to my words, and as truly as my soul trembles in the purest inspiration as it pours into yours, just as truly does the certainty flash through me : The moment will come when we shall hurl the lighting which shall bury this Press in eternal night!!!



# FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

( 1844-1900 )



One of the most important and most dangerous of German philosophers; by reason of his attack on Christian and any morality, his worship of instinct, the "superman" and the "blonde beast"; and his denial of all higher powers, one of the most important spiritual ancestors of Nazism. In his later period he most ruthlessly despised everying German. An admirer of contemporary French literature, and a friend of the Jewish intellectual culture of his time. Insane from 1889 onwards.—A brilliant writer; as a psychologist the most important predecessor of Sigmund Freud.

## BUDDHISM

( From Nietzsche : " Der Antichrist " 1888 )

With my condemnation of Christianity I should not like to have done an injustice to a religion which is akin to it and the number of whose followers is even greater: Buddhism. As nihilistic religions, they belong together--they are religions of decadence,--however, each is separated from the other in the most remarkable manner. The critic of Christianity is deeply indebted to Indian scholars for being able to compare these two religions now. --Buddhism is a hundred times more realistic than Christianity, - it is its innate heritage to be able to face problems objectively and coolly, it comes after a philosophical activity lasting hundreds of years; the conception "God" is already discarded as soon as it appears. Buddhism is the only really positivist religion to be met with in history, even in its epistemology (strict phenomenism), it no longer speaks of the "struggle with sin," but fully recognising the true nature of reality, it speaks of the "struggle with suffering." It already has and this differentiates it fundamentally from Christianity -done with the self-deception of moral concepts, to use my own phrase, it stands beyond good and evil. The two physiological facts upon which it is based and which it faces are: firstly, excessive irritability of the senses which manifests itself as a refined susceptibility to pain, then as super-spirit-

ualisation, an all-too-lengthy, living in ideas and logical processes, under the influence of which the personal instinct has suffered in favour of the "impersonal"—(—both states which at least a few of my readers, the "objective" ones, will, like myself, know from experience.) On the basis of these physiological conditions, a depression set in: which Buddha fights by means of hygiene.<sup>1</sup> Against it, he prescribes an open-air life, a life of travel; moderation and a carefully chosen diet; caution in regard to all intoxicating liquors, as also in regard to all the passions which tend to create bile and to heat the blood; no worry either for oneself or for others. He recommends ideas that bring one either peace or serenity, — he invents means of getting rid of the habit of contrary ideas. He understands goodness—being good—as promoting health. Prayer is ruled out, likewise asceticism; there is neither any Categorical Imperative nor any coercion whatsoever, even within a monastery (it is possible to leave it if one so desires—). All these things would have been only a means of accentuating the above-mentioned excessive irritability. And this is just why he does not exhort his followers to fight against those who think differently; nothing is more abhorred in his doctrine than the feeling of revenge, of aversion, and of resentment ("not through hostility doth hostility end"; the touching refrain of the whole of Buddhism...). And rightly so; for it is precisely these passions which are thoroughly *unhealthy* in view of the principal dietetic object. The mental fatigue which he finds already existent

## *Germans beyond Germany*

and which expresses itself in excessive "objectivity" (i. e. enfeeblement of the individual interest—loss of stability and of "egoism"), he combats by leading even the most spiritual interests imperatively back to the individual. In Buddha's doctrine egoism becomes a duty: the "one thing needful," the "How canst thou be rid of suffering" regulates and defines the whole of the spiritual diet (—we may think of that Athenian who also declared war 'on' pure "scientificality," Socrates, who raised personal egoism to the dignity of a moral even in the realm of problems).

Buddhism pre-supposes a very mild climate, great gentleness and liberality in customs, and no militarism. The movement must originate among the higher and even learned classes. Serenity, calmness and absence of desire, are the highest of aims, and they are attained. Buddhism is not a religion in which perfection is only aspired to: perfection is the normal case.—

In Christianity the instincts of the subjected and oppressed come to the fore: it is the lowest classes who seek their salvation in Christianity. Here the casuistry of sin, self-criticism, conscience inquisition, are practised as a pastime, as a remedy for boredom. Here love for a mighty being, called "God", is constantly kept alive (by means of prayer); the highest is regarded as unattainable, as a mere gift, as "grace". Here candour is also lacking: concealment and the darkened room are Christian. Here the body is despised, hygiene is repudiated as sensual; the Church repudiates even cleanliness

*Friedrich Nietzsche*

(—the first Christian measure after the banishment of the Moors of Spain was the closing of the public baths, of which Cordova alone possessed 270). A certain spirit of cruelty towards oneself and others is also Christian: hatred of all those who do not share one's views; the will to persecute. Sombre and exciting imaginations are in the foreground; the most desired states and those which are described by the highest-sounding names are really of an epileptic nature; diet is chosen in such a way as to favour morbid symptoms and to over-excite the nerves. Christian, too, is the mortal hatred of the earth's rulers,—the “noble”—and at the same time a concealed and secret competition with them (the subjected leave the “body” to their master—they want only the “soul” . . .). Christian is the hatred of the intellect, of pride, of courage, freedom, libertinage of the mind; Christian is the hatred of the senses, of the joys of the senses, of joy in general.

When Christiahity left its native soil, which consisted of the lowest classes, the underworld of the ancient world, and went forth in search of power among barbaric nations, it no longer had exhausted men to deal with, but inwardly savage and self-lacerating men—the strong men, but misfits. Here, dissatisfaction with oneself, suffering through oneself, is not, as in the case of the Buddhist, excessive irritability and susceptibility to pain, but rather, conversely, it is an inordinate desire to inflict pain, to discharge the inner tension in hostile actions and imaginations. Christianity required barbaric ideas

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and values, in order to be able to master barbarians : such are for instance, the sacrifice of the first-born, the drinking of blood at communion, the contempt for the intellect and for culture ; torture in all its forms, sensual and non-sensual ; the great pomp of the cult. Buddhism is a religion for *over-mature* men, for races which have become kind, gentle, and over-spiritual, and which feel pain too easily (—Europe is not nearly ripe for it yet—) ; it calls them back to peace and serenity, to a diet for the mind, to a certain hardening of the body. Christianity aims at mastering beasts of prey ; its expedient is to make them ill—to render feeble is the Christian recipe for taming, for “civilisation”. Buddhism is a religion for the twilight and tiredness of civilisation ; Christianity does not even find civilisation at hand when it appears,—under certain circumstances it lays the foundations of civilisation.

To repeat it, Buddhism is a hundred times colder, more truthful, more objective. It no longer needs to make its suffering, its susceptibility to pain respectable by the interpretation of sin—it just says what it thinks : “ I suffer ”. To the barbarian, on the other hand, suffering in itself is not a respectable thing : in order to acknowledge to himself that he is suffering, he must first have an explanation ( his instinct leads him rather to deny his suffering, or to endure it in silence ). In his case, the word “ devil ” was a blessing : man had an almighty and terrible enemy—he had no reason to be ashamed of suffering at the hands of such an enemy. —

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# ON FRANCE AND FRENCH AUTHORS

( From Nietzsche : " Ecce Homo " 1888 )

It is to a small number of old French authors that I always return again and again ; I believe only in French culture, and regard everything else in Europe which calls itself " culture " as a misunderstanding, to say nothing of German culture....The few cases of higher culture which I have come across in Germany were all of French origin, especially Madame Cosima Wagner, by far the most decisive voice in matters of taste that I have ever heard.—The fact that I do not read, but love Pascal, as the most instructive sacrifice to Christianity, murdered by inches, first bodily, then psychologically, according to the terrible logic of this most atrocious form of inhuman cruelty ; the fact that I have something of Montaigne's mischievousness in my soul, and—who knows?—perhaps in my body too ; the fact that my artist's taste defends the names of Molière, Corneille and Racine, not without bitterness, against such a disordered genius as Shakespeare—all this does not prevent me from regarding even the latest Frenchmen as charming companions too. I can think of absolutely no century in history, in which such enquiring and at the same time such subtle psychologists could be fished up than in present-day Paris. I shall mention a few at random—for their number is by no means small—Messieurs Paul Bourget, Pierre Loti, Gyp,

## *Germans beyond Germany*

Meilhac, Anatole France, Jules Lemaître ; or, to point to one of strong race, a genuine Latin, of whom I am especially fond, Guy de Maupassant. Between ourselves, I prefer *this* generation even to its masters, all of whom were corrupted by German philosophy ( Monsieur Taine, for instance, by Hegel, to whom he is indebted for his misunderstanding of great men and great periods ). Wherever Germany reaches, she spoils culture.. It was the war ( 1870-71 ) which first " released " the spirit of France... Stendhal is one of the happiest accidents of my life—for everything that marks an epoch in my life has come to me by accident and never by means of a recommendation. Stendhal is quite priceless, with his psychologist's eye, quick at anticipating ; with his grasp of facts, which reminds me that he was near the greatest of all masters of facts ( ex ungue Napoleonem ) ; and last but not least, as an honest atheist—a species which is both rare and difficult to discover in France.—To Prosper Mérimée all honour!... Perhaps I am even envious of Stendhal ? He robbed me of the best atheistic joke, which I of all people could have perpetrated : " God's only excuse is that He does not exist. " ... I myself have said somewhere—" What has been the greatest objection to life hitherto ?—God..."

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Even at the present day, France is still the home of the most intellectual and refined culture in Europe, the high school of taste ; but we must know where to find

this "France of taste". The "Norddeutsche Zeitung",<sup>1</sup> for instance, or whoever expresses his views therein, regards the French as "barbarians"—for my part, I would seek the black continent, where the slaves ought still to be liberated, in Northern Germany... But those who belong to that select France take good care to conceal themselves: they may be a small body of men who represent it, and there may be some among them who do not stand on very firm legs—a few may be fatalists, hypochondriacs, invalids: others may be enervated and artificial—such are those who have the ambition to be artistic—but all the loftiness and delicacy which still remain in this world, is in their possession. In this France of intellect, which is also the France of pessimism, Schopenhauer is already much more at home than he ever was in Germany; his principal work has already been translated twice, and the second time so excellently that now I prefer to read Schopenhauer in French (—he was an accident among Germans, just as I am—the Germans have no fingers wherewith to grasp us; they have no fingers at all—only claws). To say nothing of Heine—"l'adorable Heine", as they say in Paris—who long since has passed into the flesh and blood of the more profound and more soulful of French lyricists. How could the horned cattle of Germany know how to deal with the "délicatesses" of such a nature! And lastly, as to Richard Wagner, it is absolutely obvious that Paris is the very soil for Wagner: the more French

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<sup>1</sup> a nationalist German paper.—ED.

### *Germans beyond Germany*

music adapts itself to the needs of "l'âme moderne", the more it will "Wagnerise,"—it is far enough advanced in this direction already.—We should not allow ourselves to be misled by Wagner himself in this matter—it was simply disgraceful on Wagner's part to mock at Paris, as he did, in its agony in 1871... In spite of it all, in Germany Wagner is only a misunderstanding: who could be more incapable of understanding anything about Wagner than the young Kaiser,<sup>2</sup> for instance?—To any one familiar with the movement of European culture, this fact, however, is certain, that French romanticism and Richard Wagner are most closely related.

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<sup>2</sup> Wilhelm II.—Ed.

# WAGNER AND WAGNERITES<sup>1</sup>

( From Nietzsche : " Ecce Homo " 1888 )

It is not that I have any arguments against Wagnerites, and " hoc genus omne," who believe that they honour Wagner by believing him to be like themselves : no, I have only a contemptuous curl of my lip for them.. With a temperament like mine, so strange in my deepest instincts to everything German, that even the proximity of a German retards my digestion, my first meeting with Wagner was the first moment in my life when I could breathe freely: I felt, I honoured him, as something foreign, as the opposite and the incarnate protest against all " German virtues."—We who passed our childhood in the marshy atmosphere of the fifties, are necessarily pessimists as regards the notion " German ; " we cannot be anything but revolutionaries—we can assent to no state of affairs which allows the bigoted hypocrite to be at the top. I care not whether this bigoted hypocrite acts in different colours today, whether he dresses in scarlet or puts on the uniform of the Hussars. Well ! Wagner was a revolutionary—he ran away from the Germans... As an artist, a man has no home in Europe except Paris ; that " délicatesse " of all the five artistic senses which Wagner's art presupposes, those fingers that

<sup>1</sup> As is well-known, Richard Wagner has been promoted as the official composer of Nazism and Adolf Hitler. — ED.

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can detect fine nuances, psychological morbidity—all these are only to be found in Paris. Nowhere else can you find this passion for matters of form, this earnestness in matters of "mise-en-scène", which is the Parisian earnestness par excellence. People in Germany have no idea of the tremendous ambition that lives in the heart of a Parisian artist. The German is good-natured. Wagner was by no means good-natured... But I have already said quite enough about Wagner's real nature and about those to whom he is most closely akin: namely the late French romanticists, that high-soaring, elevating type of artists, like Delacroix and Berlioz, with a background of incurable disease in their minds, all of them fanatics of expression, and virtuosos through and through... Who was really the first intelligent follower of Wagner? Charles Baudelaire, the same man who first understood Delacroix—that typical decadent, in whom a whole generation of artists saw their reflection; he was perhaps the last of them too... What is it that I have never forgiven Wagner? The fact that he condescended to the Germans—that he became a Reichs-German... Wherever Germany reaches, she spoils culture.

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The beginnings of my book "Human, All-too Human" ("Menschliches, Allzumenschliches") date back to those weeks of the first musical festival at Bayreuth; a feeling of profound strangeness towards everything that surrounded me there, is one of its first

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bases. He who has any idea of the visions which even at that time had flitted across my path, can guess how I felt when one day I awoke in Bayreuth. It was just as if I had been dreaming... Where on earth was I? I was unable to recognise anything; I scarcely recognised Wagner.—

What had happened? Wagner had been translated into German!—The Wagnerite had become master of Wagner!—German art! the German master! German beer!... We who know only too well the kind of refined artists and cosmopolitanism in taste, to which alone Wagner's art can appeal, were beside ourselves to see Wagner decked out with German "virtues".—I think I know the Wagnerite, I have "experienced" three generations of them, from Brendel of blessed memory, who confounded Wagner with Hegel, to the "idealists" of the "Bayreuther Blätter", who confound Wagner with themselves—I have received every kind of confession about Wagner, from "beautiful souls". My kingdom for a single intelligent word!—In very truth, a hair-raising company!—Not a single abortion is lacking among them, not even the anti-Semite.—Poor Wagner! Into whose hands had he fallen?—If only he had gone into a herd of swine! But among Germans!... Some day, for the edification of posterity, one really ought to have a genuine Bayreuthian stuffed, or, better still, preserved in spirit—for it is precisely spirit that is lacking—with this inscription at the foot of the jar: "This is what the 'spirit' looked like, whereon the German Reich was founded"....

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Enough! In the middle of the festivities I suddenly left the place for a few weeks, despite the fact that a charming Parisian lady sought to console me; I excused myself to Wagner simply by means of a fatalistic telegram. In a little spot called Klingenbrunn, buried in the heart of the Czech mountains, I carried my melancholy and my contempt of the Germans about with me like a disease.

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# THE GERMAN MIND

( From Nietzsche : " Unzeitgemässse Betrachtungen "  
" Thoughts out of Season ", 1873-74.)

Public opinion in Germany seems almost to forbid any mention of the evil and dangerous consequences of a war, especially a victorious war. All the more attention, therefore, is commanded by those writers who have no more important opinion than this public opinion, hence vie with one another in praise of the war, giving their jubilant consent to the powerful influences it has exerted upon morality, culture and art. And yet a great victory is a great danger. Human nature bears a triumph less easily than a defeat ; indeed, it is easier to gain a victory of this sort than to bear it in such a way that it may not ultimately lead to a more serious defeat.

Of all evil results due to the last war with France,<sup>1</sup> the most deplorable, perhaps, is that widespread and even universal error : the error of public opinion and of all who think publicly, that German culture was also victorious in the struggle, and that it should now, therefore, be decked with garlands, as a fitting recognition of such extraordinary events and successes. This delusion is in the highest degree pernicious : not because it is a delusion—for there are errors which are most salutary and blessed—but because it threatens to convert our

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<sup>1</sup> The Franco-German War 1870-71.—ED.

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victory into an utter defeat, the defeat, nay, the extirpation of the German mind for the benefit of the "German Reich."

Severe military discipline, natural bravery and sustaining power, superior generalship, unity and obedience in the rank and file—in short, factors which have nothing to do with culture, obtained for us the victory over an opponent in whom the most essential of these factors were lacking. The only wonder is that what is now called "culture" in Germany did not hinder these military operations so necessary to a great victory. Perhaps this was only because this something which calls itself "culture" thought it profitable on this occasion, to be obliging.

If, however, it be allowed to grow and to spread, if it be spoilt by the flattering delusion that it has been victorious—then, as I have said, it will have the power to extirpate the German mind, and then—who knows whether there will still be anything to be made out of the surviving German body?

If it were possible to direct that calm and tenacious bravery which the German opposed to the pathetic and spontaneous fury of the Frenchman, against the inner enemy, against the highly suspicious, and, at all events, un-national "cultivation" which, owing to a dangerous misunderstanding, is called "culture" in Germany, then all hope of a really genuine German "culture"—the opposite of that "cultivation"—would not be entirely lost.—But whether it is possible to turn German

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bravery into new channels seems to me to become ever more and more doubtful, and after the war, daily less and less likely ; for I see how firmly everyone is convinced that such a struggle and such bravery are no longer necessary ; on the contrary, that most things are regulated as satisfactorily as they possibly can be—or, at all events, that everything really important has been discovered and accomplished long ago : in a word, that the best seed of culture is already sown everywhere, and is now either shooting up its fresh green blades, or, here and there, even bursting forth into luxuriant blossom.' In this respect people are not merely content ; happiness and ecstasy reign supreme. I find this ecstasy and happiness in the incomparably self-satisfied behaviour of German journalists and manufacturers of novels, tragedies, songs and histories : for these are manifestly birds of a feather, members of a gang who seem to have conspired to take possession of the leisure and ruminative hours of the modern man, i. e. his "cultural moments" and to intoxicate him with their printed paper. Since the war all is gladness, dignity and self-consciousness in this happy band ; after such "successes of German culture" they feel themselves not only approved and sanctioned, but wellnigh sacrosanct.—

The moral qualities of severe discipline, of calmer obedience, have however, nothing in common with culture : these were characteristic of the victorious Macedonian army, for instance, and yet the Greek soldiers were infinitely more cultivated. It can only be due to

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a misapprehension when people talk of the victory of German scholarship and culture, a misapprehension resulting from the fact that every precise notion of culture has now vanished from Germany.

Culture is, above all, the unity of artistic style, in every expression of the life of a people. Abundant knowledge and learning, however, are not essential to it, nor are they a sign of its existence; and, at a pinch, they might be on excellent terms with the very opposite of culture—with barbarity.

To be educated means: not to show how wretched and bad one is, how predatory in striving, how insatiable in collecting, how selfish and shameless in enjoying. Several times when I have pointed out to anyone the absence of a German culture, the objection was raised: “but this absence is quite natural, for the Germans have hitherto been too poor and humble. Just let our people grow rich and self-conscious, then they will have a culture too!” Faith may make happy, but this kind of faith makes me unhappy, because I feel that that German culture in the future of which these people believe—that of wealth, polish and polite dissimulation—is the most inimical contrast of that German culture in which I believe. True, whosoever has to live among Germans, suffers sadly from the notorious greyness of their lives and their senses, the lack of form, the stupidity and dulness, the clumsiness in more delicate intercourse, still more from the envy and a certain secretiveness and impurity of character. He is pained and offended by

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the rooted pleasure in what is false and artificial, in bad imitations, in the translation of a good foreign thing into a bad German thing. And now when there is the additional and even worse complaint, that feverish restlessness, that mania for success and gain, that over-estimation of the importance of the passing moment, it is indeed a revolting thought that all these diseases and failings are in principle never to be cured, but only glossed over.

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All of us ought to have known this of our own accord. Besides, one of the few who had the right to speak to Germans in terms of reproach drew attention to the fact in public. "We Germans are of yesterday," Goethe once said to Eckermann. "True, for the last hundred years we have diligently cultivated ourselves, but a few centuries may yet have to run their course before our fellow-countrymen become permeated with sufficient intellectuality and higher culture to have it said of them, 'It is a long time since they were barbarians.'

If, however, our public and private life so manifestly lacks all signs of a productive and characteristic culture; if, moreover, our great artists, with that earnest vehemence and honesty which is peculiar to greatness, have admitted, and still admit, the fact—a fact which is so very humiliating to a gifted nation: how can it still be possible for such great contentment to reign among German scholars? For since the last war this spirit of

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contentment has seemed ever more and more ready to break forth into exultant cries and demonstrations of triumph. At all events, there is a belief that we have a genuine culture, and the great gulf fixed between this self-satisfied, nay triumphant faith, and the obvious defect, seems to be noticed only by the select few. For all who think with the public mind have blindfolded their eyes and closed their ears. That great gulf is not even acknowledged to exist. How is this possible? What power is so mighty as to dictate such a denial? What species of men must have attained to supremacy in Germany that they can forbid feelings so strong and simple, or at least forbid their expression? This power, this species of men, I will name—they are the Bookish bourgeois.

Owing to the lack of self-knowledge, the bookish bourgeois is firmly convinced that this "culture" is the consummate expression of real German culture; and, as he everywhere meets with scholars of his own type, as all public institutions, whether schools, universities or academies of art, are so organised as to be in complete harmony with his education and needs, he bears with him wherever he goes the triumphant feeling that he is the worthy champion of present-day German culture, and he frames his pretensions and claims accordingly.

If real culture takes unity of style for granted (and not even an inferior and degenerate culture can be imagined without a certain harmony of various confluent styles), it is possible that the confusion underlying the

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bookish bourgeois's error may arise from the fact that he comes into contact everywhere with creatures cast in the same mould as himself, and so he concludes that this uniformity among all "educated people" must indicate a certain unity of style in German education—in short, culture. All around him he sees only needs and views like his own; wherever he goes; he finds himself embraced by a bond of tacit convention on many matters, especially on matters religious and artistic. This imposing sameness, this "tutti unisono" which, though it has not been commanded, is yet ever ready to burst forth, persuades him into the belief that a culture must here be flourishing. Bourgeoisie, however, even though it may be systematically organised and powerful, does not constitute a culture by virtue of its system alone; it does not even constitute an inferior culture, but invariably the reverse—namely, firmly established barbarity. For the uniformity of character which we see in the German educated people of today is only the result of a conscious or unconscious exclusion and negation of all the artistically productive forms and requirements of a true style. A sad derangement must have taken place in the mind of the bookish bourgeois; for he regards as culture itself those very things which culture negates; and, as he proceeds logically, he succeeds in creating a connected group of these negations—a system of non-culture, to which one might at a pinch grant a certain "unity of style", if indeed there is any sense at all in attributing style to barbarity.

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How was it possible for such a type as that of the bookish bourgeois to develop? and even granting its development, how was it able to rise to the powerful position of supreme judge in all questions of German culture? How was this possible, when a whole procession of grand, heroic figures has already filed past us, whose every movement, the expression of whose every feature, whose questioning voice and burning eye betrayed the one fact, that they were seekers, and that they sought fervently and with earnest perseverance that which the bookish bourgeois had long fancied he had found—genuine original German culture? Is there a soil—thus they seemed to ask—a soil that is pure enough, untouched, of sufficient virgin sanctity, to allow the German mind to build its house upon it? Questioning thus, they wandered through the wilderness, and the woods of wretched ages and narrow conditions, and as seekers they disappeared from our ken; so that one of them, at an advanced age, could say, in the name of all: “For half a century my life has been hard and bitter enough; I have allowed myself no rest, but have ever striven, sought and done, to the best and to the utmost of my ability.”

How does our bookish bourgeoisie regard these seekers? It regards them simply as men who have already found, and seems to forget that they themselves only claimed to be seekers. We have our culture, say our bookish bourgeois. Why, we have our classics! Not only is the foundation there, but the building already

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stands upon it—we ourselves are that building. And the bookish bourgeois raises his hand to his brow.

But, in order to be able thus to misjudge our classics and to honour them in so insulting a fashion, people must have ceased to know them. And this, generally speaking, is in fact what has happened.

What ! my worthy bookish bourgeois, can you think of Lessing without shame ? He who was ruined precisely on account of your stupidity, the defects of your theatres, your scholars, your theologians, without once being allowed to attempt that eternal flight for which he had been born into the world. And what are your feelings when you think of Winckelmann, who, in order to turn his eyes from your grotesque puerilities, went begging to the Jesuits for help, and whose ignominious conversion dishonours not him, but you ? Dare you mention Schiller's name without blushing ? Look at his portrait. See the flashing eyes that glance contemptuously over your heads, the fatal flush of the cheek—do these things mean nothing to you ? In him you had a magnificent, a divine toy, but you broke it. And this crippled and harassed life would have burned out still more quickly, owing to you, if he had not had the friendship of Goethe. You have never lifted a finger to help in the life-work of a single one of your great geniuses, and now you would make it a dogma that none of them is to be helped in future ? But for every one of them you were “the resistance of the obtuse world”, which Goethe calls by its name in his epilogue to Schiller's “Song of the Bell”; for

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all of them you were the peevish dullards, or the envious bigots, or the malicious egoists : *in spite of you* each one of them created his works, against you each directed his attacks, and thanks to you each prematurely sank,—his work still unfinished—broken or bewildered by the strain of these conflicts. And now you think you are to be permitted, *tamquam re bene gesta*, to praise such men!—

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When platitudes, hackneyed, feeble and vulgar phrases are the rule, and the bad and the corrupt become refreshing exceptions, then all that is vigorous, distinguished and beautiful falls into disrepute. So that, in Germany, the story of the normally-built traveller and his experience in the land of hunchbacks is constantly being repeated. He was so shamefully insulted there, owing to his quaint figure and lack of dorsal convexity, that at last a priest had to intervene on his behalf and appeased the people thus : ‘My brethren, rather pity this poor stranger, and make thank-offerings to the gods, for having blessed you with such attractive humps !’

( From Nietzsche : " Goetzen daemmerung "  
" The Twilight of the Idols ", 1888 )

Perhaps I know the Germans, perhaps I may even tell them a few home-truths. The new Germany possesses a large quantity of inherited and acquired ability, so that for a time it may spend the amassed treasure of strength lavishly. It is not a high culture, which has become a master with it, still less is it a delicate taste, a distinguished " refinement " of instincts ; but more many virtues than any other country in Europe can boast. Much courage and self-respect, much confidence in intercourse, in reciprocity of duties, much diligence, much perseverance—and an inherited moderation which needs a spur rather than a brake. I add that we still obey here, without obedience being humiliating... And no one despises his adversary...

You see it is my wish to do the Germans justice : I should not like to be untrue to myself in this—and so I must raise my objection to them too. It costs dear to come into power : power stupefies ... The Germans—they were once called the nation of thinkers : do they still think at all nowadays ? The Germans are bored with the mind now, the Germans mistrust the mind now, politics devours all seriousness for really intellectual things—" Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles," I fear that was the end of German philosophy...

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"Are there German philosophers? Are there German poets? Are there good German books?"—I am asked abroad. I blush, but with the bravery which is mine even in desperate cases, I reply: "Yes, Bismarck!" Could I even admit what books are read today?...Cursed instinct of mediocrity!—

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—What the German mind might be, who has not had his gloomy thoughts on this! But this people has voluntarily stupefied itself, for nearly a thousand years: nowhere have the two great European narcotics, alcohol and Christianity, been more viciously misused. Lately a third has even been added to them, with which alone the ruin of all fine and keen mobility of the mind can be completed, music, our choked, choking German music,—How much irksome heaviness, lameness, dampness, night-cap, how much beer there is in German intelligence! How is it possible that young men who devote their existence to the most intellectual of aims do not feel in themselves the first instinct of intellectuality, the self-preservation-instinct of the mind—and drink beer?...The alcoholism of learned youth is perhaps not a mark of interrogation as regards their erudition—one can be a great scholar without spirit—but in every other respect it remains a problem.—Where is it not to be found, that gentle deterioration which beer produces in the mind?

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—I spoke of the German mind : that it is growing coarser, shallower. Is that enough ?—Really it is something quite different that frightens me : how German seriousness, German profoundness, German passion in the things of the mind, are going downhill. The pathos has changed, not merely the intellectuality.— Here and there I come in contact with German universities : what an atmosphere prevails among their scholars, how dreary, self-satisfied and lukewarm their intellectuality has grown ! It would be a profound misunderstanding if you were to raise the objection of German science—and moreover give me proof that you have not read a single word of mine. For the last seventeen years I have not tired of exposing the devitalising influence of the ways of our present-day education factories. The hard helotism to which the immense extent of the sciences condemns everyone today, is one of the main reasons why natures endowed with fuller, richer, deeper qualities can no longer find education and educators adequate to supply their needs. Our culture suffers from nothing more than from the superfluity of fragmentary loafers ; our universities are, against their will, the actual hot-houses for this kind of instinct-degeneration of the mind. And the whole of Europe already has an idea of it—high politics deceives no one...Germany is known more and more as Europe's low plain.—I am still seeking a German with whom I could be serious in my way—how much more for one with whom I could be

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gay!—The *Twilight of the Idols*: Ah, who would understand today from what seriousness a philosopher is recovering here!—The gaiety in us is what is most incomprehensible...

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Let us make an estimate: it is not only obvious that German culture is on the decline, there is no lack of sufficient reason for this decline either. Ultimately no one can spend more than he has:—this is true of individuals, this is true of nations. If we spend all our strength on power, on high politics, on administrations, international commerce, parliamentarism, military interests,—if we give away the portion of understanding, seriousness, will, self-control, that we are, in that direction, then the other side will be short. Culture and the State—let us not deceive ourselves herein—are antagonists: “Culture-State” is merely a modern idea. The one lives on the other, the one thrives at the expense of the other. All great times of culture are times of political decline: whatever is great in the sense of culture, was unpolitical, even anti-political... Goethe’s heart opened at the phenomenon of Napoleon—it closed at the “Wars of Liberation”...At the very moment when Germany rises as a great power, France gains a changed importance as a Cultural power. Even to-day much new seriousness, much new passion of mind has migrated to Paris: the question of pessimism, for instance, the question of Wagner, almost all psychological and artistic questions are discussed in an

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incomparably more refined and thorough manner there than in Germany—the Germans are even incapable of this kind of seriousness.—In the history of European culture the rise of the “Reich”<sup>2</sup> means, above all, one thing: a transference of the centre of gravity. It is already known everywhere: in the main thing—and culture remains that—the Germans no longer count. People ask: Can you show even one mind worthy to count among European minds? as your Goethe, your Hegel, your Heinrich Heine, your Schopenhauer counted? There is no end to the astonishment that there is not a single German philosopher left.—

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The whole system of higher education in Germany has lost sight of the main thing: the purpose as well as the means to the purpose. They forgot that education, formation, is a purpose in itself—and not “the Reich”—that for this purpose educators are required—and not secondary-school teachers and University scholars...educators are required, who themselves are educated, superior, refined minds, proved every moment in word and silence, cultures which have become ripe and mellow—not the learned boors whom the secondary school and University offer youth to-day as “superior ayahs.” The educators are wanting—allowing for exceptions of exceptions—they who are the first preliminary condition of education: hence the decline of German culture.—One of those very rare

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<sup>2</sup> The German “Reich” of 1870-71.—ED.

exceptions is my venerable friend Jakob Burckhardt in Basle : it is first to him that Basle owes its pre-eminence in humanity.—What the “higher schools” of Germany actually achieve is a brutal breaking in, in order, with as little waste of time as possible, to make a large number of young men useful, exploitable for the State service. “Higher education” and large number—that is a contradiction to begin with. All higher education belongs only to the exception: one must be privileged to have a right to so high a privilege. All great, all beautiful things can never be common property: *pulchrum est paucorum hominum*.—What determines the decline of German culture? The fact that “higher education” is no longer a prerogative—the democracy of “general” education, “education” which has become common... It should not be forgotten that military privileges really enforce the excessive attendance at the “higher schools”, that is, their decline.<sup>3</sup>—No one is any longer free to give his children a noble education: our “higher” schools are all equipped for the most ambiguous mediocrity, with teachers, with curricula, with aims of instruction. And everywhere an indecent haste prevails, as if anything were lost if the young man is not yet “finished” at 23 years, if he does not yet know the answer to the “main question”: which calling?—A higher type of man, by your leave, does not like “call-

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<sup>3</sup> Nietzsche stresses the privilege of being a “Reserve-Offizier,” which was of such paramount importance to every respectable German bourgeois.—ED.

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ings," precisely because they know themselves to be "called" . . . They have time, they take time, they do not think at all of being "finished"—at thirty years one is, in the higher cultural sense, a beginner, a child.—Our overcrowded secondary-schools, our overwhelmed secondary-school teachers who have been made stupid, are a scandal: to defend these conditions, as the professors of Heidelberg recently did, there are perhaps pretenses—but there are no reasons for it.

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So as not to deviate from my course, which is affirmative, and deals only indirectly, involuntarily, with contradiction and criticism, I mention here the three tasks for which educators are wanted. We have to learn to see, we have to learn to think, we have to learn to speak and to write: the aim in all three is a refined culture.—To learn to see—to accustom the eye to calmness, patience, letting things approach it; to defer judgment, to learn how to consider and grasp an individual case in all its aspects. That is the first preparation for intellectuality: not to react immediately to an impulse, but to keep the controlling, deciding instincts in hand. To learn to see is, as I understand it, almost what the unphilosophical phrase calls the strong will: the essential point being not "to want", to be able to defer the decision. All lack of intellectuality, all vulgarity is based on the incapacity to withstand an impulse—one must react, one follows each impulse. In many cases such compulsion is already morbidity, decline, symptom

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of exhaustion—almost everything that unphilosophical coarseness terms “vice” is merely that physiological incapacity not to react.—An application of having learned to see: as a learner one will have become generally slow, sceptical, resistant. First of all one will approach anything strange, any kind of new thing with hostile calmness—one will pull one’s hand back from it. To stand with all doors open, to lie down dutifully on one’s stomach before every little fact, to be ever ready to jump, sit and burst into others and other things, in short the famous modern “objectivity” is bad taste, is unrefined par excellence.—

To learn to think: in our schools there is no longer any notion of this. Even at the universities, indeed among the very scholars in philosophy, logic as a theory, as a practice, as a calling, is beginning to die out. Read German books: no longer the faintest reminder of the fact that thinking requires a technique, a curriculum, a will to mastery—that thinking must be learned, just as dancing must be learned, as a kind of dancing . . . Who among Germans still knows from experience that fine shudder which the light feet in the intellectual sphere radiate in all one’s muscles!—The stiff awkwardness of the intellectual gesture, the heavy hand in grasping—that is German to such a degree that abroad it is confused with German character generally. The German has no fingers for nuances. . . That the Germans even tolerated their philosophers, above all that most deformed cripple of notions who has ever existed,

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the great Kant, gives a good idea of German gracefulness.—As dancing in any form must not be left out of a refined education, the ability to dance with one's feet, with ideas, with words: need I add that one must be able to do it with one's pen too—that one must learn to write?—At this point, however, I would become utterly unintelligible to German readers...

But here nothing shall stop me from being rude, and from telling the Germans a few unpleasant home truths : who else will do it if I do not ? I refer to their prostitution in matters historical. Not only have German historians entirely lost the breadth of vision which enables one to grasp the course of culture and the values of culture ; not only are they one and all political (or Church ) Jack puddings ; but they have even banned this very breadth of vision. A man must above all be " German ", he must belong to " the race ", only then can he decide on all values and lack of values in matters historical—he simply orders them....To be German is an argument, " Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles " is a principle ; the Germans stand for the " moral order of the universe " in history ; compared with the " imperium romanum ", they are the standard-bearers of freedom : compared with the 18th century the restorers of morality, of the " Categorical Imperative " .. There is such a thing as the writing of history from the point of view of the German Reich ; there is even, I fear, anti-Semitic history—there is also history written with an eye to the court, and Herr von Treitschke is not ashamed...Not long ago an idiotic opinion on history, an observation of the Swabian aesthete Vischer, since happily deceased, made the round of the German newspapers as a " truth " to which every German must

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assent. The observation was this : “The Renaissance and the Reformation only together constitute a whole—the aesthetic rebirth, and the moral rebirth.”—I lose patience when I hear such statements, and I feel inclined, I even feel it my duty, to tell the Germans, for once in a way, all that they have on their conscience. All great crimes against culture for the last four centuries lie on their conscience!... And always for the same reason, always owing to their innermost cowardice in the face of reality, which is also cowardice in the face of truth ; always owing to the love of falsehood which has become almost instinctive in them—in a word—“idealism”....It was the Germans who deprived Europe of the fruits, the whole meaning of her last period of greatness—the period of the Renaissance. At a moment when a higher order of values, values that were noble, that said yea to life, and that promised a future, had succeeded in triumphing over the opposite values, the values of degeneration, in their very residence—and even in the instincts of those ruling there!—

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On two different occasions, just when, at the cost of immense courage and self-control, an upright, unequivocal and perfectly scientific attitude of mind had been attained, the Germans managed to find by-ways leading back to the old “ideal”, compromises between truth and the “ideal”, in short, formulae for the right to reject science and to perpetrate *lies*. Leibnitz and Kant—these

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two greatest brakes on the intellectual honesty of Europe ! Finally, at a moment when there appeared on the bridge that spanned two centuries of decadence, a superior force of genius and will strong enough to make of Europe a unit, a political and economic unit, with the object of ruling the world, the Germans, with their " Wars of Liberation " robbed Europe of the significance—the wonderful significance, of Napoleon's existence. · Thereby they laid on their conscience all that came after, all that exists to-day, this sickliness and want of reason which is most opposed to culture, and which is called nationalism, this " névrose nationale " from which Europe is suffering ; this eternal subdivision of Europe into petty states—this perpetuation of petty politics : they have even robbed Europe of its significance, of its reason—they have led it into a blind alley.—Does anyone except me know the way out of this blind alley ?...Or an attempt great enough to bind the peoples together again ?... .

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—And why should I not, after all, express my suspicion ? In my case, too, the Germans will try their best to make a stupendous fate give birth to a mere mouse. So far they have compromised themselves with me ; I doubt whether they will do better in the future. Ah ! How gladly I would prove to be a false prophet in this matter !....My natural readers and listeners are now Russians, Scandinavians, and Frenchmen—will they be so more and more?—In the history of knowledge, Germans

## Friedrich Nietzsche

are represented only by doubtful names, they have never been able to produce other than "unconscious" forgers.—The Germans must never have the honour of seeing the first upright mind in the history of intellect, that mind in which truth ultimately comes to judgment against the forgery of four thousand years, reckoned as one with the German mind. "German mind" is my foul air: I breathe with difficulty in the neighbourhood of this psychological uncleanliness that has now become instinctive—an uncleanliness which betrays every word, every look of a German. They have never gone through a seventeenth century of hard self-examination, like the French—a La Rochefoucauld, a Descartes, are a hundred times superior to the very first among Germans in uprightness—so far the Germans have had no psychologist. But psychology is almost the criterion of the *cleanliness* or *uncleanliness* of a race... And if a man is not even clean, how can he have any depth? The Germans can be compared to women, you can scarcely ever fathom their depths—they have none: and that is all. They are not even shallow. That which is called "profound" in Germany, is precisely this instinctive uncleanliness towards oneself, of which I am speaking: people do not want to be clear as to their own natures. Might I not be allowed to suggest the word "German" as an international epithet for this psychological depravity?... Have the Germans ever produced a single book that had profundity? They lack the mere idea of what constitutes profundity in a

## *Germans beyond Germany*

book. I have known scholars who thought that Kant was profound. At the Court of Prussia I fear that Herr von Treitschke is regarded as deep. And when I happen to praise Stendhal as a profound psychologist, German university professors have asked me to spell his name !

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And why should I not go right to the very end ? I like clearing the air. It is even part of my ambition to be considered the despiser of the Germans par excellence. I expressed my mistrust of the German character even at the age of twenty-six—to my mind the Germans are impossible. When I try to imagine the kind of man who runs counter to my every instinct, my mental image invariably takes the shape of a German. The first thing I ask myself when I sound a man, is whether he has a feeling for distance in him, whether he sees rank, gradation and order everywhere between man and man ; whether he makes distinctions : for it is this which constitutes a "gentilhomme." Otherwise he belongs hopelessly to that open-hearted, alas, very good-natured species, la canaille ! But the Germans are canaille—alas, they are so good-natured ! . . . A man lowers himself by frequenting the society of Germans : the German levels everything . . . With the exception of my intercourse with a few artists, and above all with Richard Wagner, I have never spent one pleasant hour with Germans . . . Let us suppose that the profoundest spirit of all ages were to appear among Germans, then some saviour of the Capitol would fancy

### *Friedrich Nietzsche*

that his own ugly soul was just as important... I cannot abide this race with which a man is always in bad company, which has no fingers for nuances—woe is me! I am a nuance myself—and which has not “esprit” in its feet, and cannot even walk! The Germans have not really feet at all, they simply have legs.... The Germans have not the faintest idea of how vulgar they are—but this is itself the height of vulgarity—they are not even ashamed of being merely Germans:... They chatter about everything, they regard themselves as fit to decide all questions; I fear that they have decided even about me.... My whole life is essentially a proof of these remarks. Vainly have I sought among them for a sign of tact and delicacy towards myself. Among Jews I did indeed find it, but not among Germans. It is my nature to be gentle and kindly to everyone—I have the right not to make distinctions—but this does not prevent me from having my eyes open. I except no one, least of all my friends—I only hope that this has not prejudiced my reputation for humanity among them! There are five or six things which I have always made points of honour.—And yet it is the truth that for many years I have considered almost every letter that has reached me as a piece of cynicism. There is more cynicism in an attitude of good will towards me than in any kind of hatred... I tell every friend to his face that he has never thought it worth while to study any one of my writings: from the slightest hints I gather that they do not even know what is in my books. And with regard to my “Zarath-

## *Germans beyond Germany*

ustra," indeed, which of my friends would have seen more in it than a piece of unwarrantable, though fortunately harmless presumption?... Ten years: and no one in Germany has yet felt it a duty to his conscience to defend my name against the absurd silence beneath which it lay buried. It was a foreigner, a Dane, who first showed sufficient fineness of instinct and courage to do this, and who protested indignantly against my so-called friends?... At what German university to-day would such lectures on my philosophy be possible, as those which Dr. Brandes<sup>4</sup> delivered last spring in Copenhagen, thus proving once more his right to the title of psychologist? I myself have never been pained by all this; that which is necessary does not hurt me. *Amor fati* is my innermost nature. This, however, does not alter the fact that I love irony and even irony in world-history. And thus, about two years before hurling the destructive thunderbolt of the "Transvaluation,"<sup>5</sup> which will send the whole earth into convulsions, I sent my "Case of Wagner" out into the world. The Germans were given the chance of practising and immortalising their stupidity on me once more, and they still have just enough time in which to do it! And have they done so?—Charmingly, my dear Germans! I congratulate you!...

<sup>4</sup> The well-known Danish-Jewish historian of literature (1842-1927)—ED.

<sup>5</sup> One of Nietzsche's works, "Transvaluation of all Values" ("Umwertung aller Werte"—1888, unfinished)—ED.

### From various works

. It was Heinrich Heine who gave me the loftiest notion of what a lyrical poet can be. Vainly I search through all realms of the millenaries for anything approaching his sweet and passionate music. He possessed that divine malice, without which I cannot imagine perfection.—I estimate the value of men and races according to whether they are able to conceive the idea of a god which is inseparable from a satyr.—And with what mastery he wields his German tongue ! One day it will be said of Heine and me that we were by far the greatest artists of the German language, and that we left incalculably far behind us everything which mere Germans made of this language.<sup>6</sup>—I must be profoundly related to Byron's "Manfred": I found all those dark abysses in myself—at the age of thirteen I was ripe for this book. Words fail me, I have only a look for those who dare to utter the name of "Faust" in the presence of "Manfred". The Germans are incapable of conceiving anything really great.

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I shall never admit that a German can understand what music is. Those musicians who are called German, the greatest foremost, are foreigners, either Slavs, Croats, Italians, Dutchmen—or Jews; or else, like Hein-

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<sup>6</sup> Nietzsche here stresses, as he does very often, his Polish origin; and Heine was of Jewish origin.—ED.

## *Germans beyond Germany*

rich Schütz, Bach and Händel, they are Germans of the strong race which has now died out.

\* \* \*

The fact that I am quite free from curiosity as to criticisms of my books, especially when they appear in newspapers, must be forgiven me. My friends, my publishers know this, and never speak to me of such things. In one particular case, I once saw all the sins that had been committed against a single book—it was “ Beyond Good and Evil ”; I could tell a fine tale about it. Is it possible that the “ National-Zeitung ”—a Prussian paper ( this comment is for the sake of my foreign readers—as for myself, I beg to state, I read only “ Le Journal des Débats ” )—in all seriousness regarded the book as a “ sign of the times ”, as true, genuine philosophy of Prussian Toryism for which the “ Kreuz-Zeitung ”<sup>7</sup> only lacked sufficient courage ? . . .

This was said to the Germans : for everywhere else I have my readers—all of them of exceptional intelligence, worthy characters, trained in high offices and superior duties ; I have even real geniuses among my readers. In Vienna, in St. Petersburg, in Stockholm, in Copenhagen, in Paris and New York—I have been discovered everywhere : I have not yet been discovered in Europe’s low plain—Germany. . . .

\* \* \*

I can do everything ; but to think in German, to feel in German, that is beyond my powers . . . My old

<sup>7</sup> The most reactionary Berlin newspaper of these Prussian Tories.—ED.

*Friedrich Nietzsche*

teacher Ritschl used to say that I planned even my philological treatises after the manner of a Parisian "romancier"—that I made them absurdly thrilling. In Paris itself people are surprised at "toutes mes audaces et finesse";—the phrase is Monsieur Taine's:—I fear that even in the highest forms of the dithyramb, that salt will be found pervading my work which never loses its savour, which never becomes "German"—namely "esprit" . . . I cannot do otherwise. So help me God! Amen.—

\* \* \*

Goethe's fate in Germany, that old-maidish land soured by morality, is well known. He was always an offence to the Germans, his only sincere admirers were among Jewesses.—<sup>8</sup>

\* \* \*

—I am often asked why I really write in German: as I am nowhere less appreciatively read than in the fatherland.

\* \* \*

—I was always condemned to the society of Germans.

\* \* \*

"German mind"; for eighteen years a "contradic-tio in adjecto"

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<sup>8</sup> Nietzsche is thinking in the first place of Rahel von Warnhagen and her circle—ED.

## *Germans beyond Germany*

Ah, these Germans, what they have already cost us ! Frustrated—the work of the Germans was always that.—The Reformation ; Leibnitz ; Kant and the so-called German philosophy ; the Wars of “Liberation” ; the Reich—every time a frustration for something that was already there, for something irrevocable... They are my enemies, I confess it, these Germans : I despise in them every kind of impurity of conception and value, of cowardice before every honest “yes” and “no”. For nearly a thousand years they have matted and tangled everything their fingers touched, they have on their conscience all the half-heartednesses—the three-eighths-heartednesses!—from which Europe is suffering.

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I am to some extent aware of my privileges as an author : in one or two cases I got proofs of how very much the habit of reading my books “spoils” taste. Other books are simply unbearable after mine, and first of all philosophical ones. It is an incomparable distinction to cross the threshold of this noble and subtle world— it is indeed inaccessible for Germans ; it is, after all, a distinction which must be deserved.—

ANSELM FEUERBACH

( 1829—1880 )



*Classicism painter; together with Hans v. Marées the most prominent German painter of his time.*

# CONFessions OF A PAINTER.

From "Anselm Feuerbach, Ein Vermaechtnis", published  
by his mother Henriette Feuerbach.

THERE are probably few artists who have found it so difficult to win tardy and grudging recognition in their own country as I have. It seemed to be the custom only to search for faults in my works, and wilfully to overlook the good in them. They resisted my art as an evil to the commonwealth. Whatever I did, nothing found favour, and every new period of my development, which the connoisseur usually follows with especial interest, was in my case interpreted as a false direction, a relapse.

At the time of transition into the great historical themes, I chose, for the sake of the plastic exposition, a somewhat simpler expression in colour, which was nevertheless absolutely in keeping with the treatment of the subject : then the destructive term "grey period" was invented ; even now it has not entirely faded from the memory of my severe critics.

If the consequences had not been so fateful for me, this continuous relapse in which, in the opinion of the German critics, I found myself nearly all my life, and in which nevertheless I always advanced, would have had its highly amusing aspects.

*Anselm Feuerbach*

With the exception of the period from 1863 to 1867, into which fell the works ordered by Baron von Schack, and when, therefore, few of my works were in the public eye, each successive picture by Anselm Feuerbach which arrived on German soil was received either by an outburst of indignation or a pitying shrug of the shoulders. If the picture then survived the shower-bath of critical journals and newspaper reports, then people began to find it tolerably interesting, and if in the meantime a still more recent work of the unfortunately very prolific artist had started on its penitential pilgrimage, they even regarded it as beautiful. In this way did my reputation in Germany gradually become established.

I have endured this wavering of the balance of criticism for over twenty years, and to-day I should like to express my earnest thanks for it to the Art clubs and Exhibition committees.

While searching through old papers, I came across a mighty packet of letters from German Exhibition authorities, addressed to my mother and exactly covering the period above mentioned. The content of all these communications is as follows:—

“Your son’s pictures have been well packed and despatched to your esteemed address.

Yours faithfully,”

A large part of this collection belongs to Berlin, where, it is true, I had from the year 1852 onwards obstinately and untiringly exhibited the whole series of my principal pictures without the slightest success.

## *Germans beyond Germany*

Will posterity believe that to-day, while I write these pages, to my knowledge no art society has acquired a picture of mine, and that only two State galleries, those at Karlsruhe and Stuttgart respectively, have opened their rooms to works from my hand? The one reluctantly, at the command of higher authorities, the other because they succeeded in getting my second "Iphigenie" at a very low price "owing to the faults in drawing." —

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How different,—ah, how different it would be if I had an art-loving, art-cultured nation behind me..

(In a letter from Rome, 2nd Dec. 1867)

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Pay attention carefully !.

Berlin Exhibition 1876, last room, known as the "mortuary", upper storey, just below the ceiling, with the light turned the wrong way: "Medea" and "The Judgment of Paris" by Anselm Feuerbach.

Rent a dry place in the warehouse and have the pictures stored there in their cases. It is the best for them and for me. I have been unwell; terribly tired, invincibly disgusted...

( In a letter to his mother, Sept. 1870 )

• 100 •

*Anselm Feuerbach*

.... I do not want people to read in my face how the Germans have sinned against me...

I love my fatherland, though I have nothing to thank it for.

( In a letter from Rome, Dec. 1870.)

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I was told that everyone, from the professor down to the house-porter, made fun of my bad picture. They told me this with dubious smiles.

It is like that in Vienna.

( In a letter from Vienna during the World-Exhibition, 1873. )

## THE GERMANS IN ROME

As a rule with little money but fully conscious of his importance in the history of culture and with the incontestable assurance of all-surveying knowledge, the learned German faces a millenary culture. I make allowances for exceptions. We see him with his straw hat in the winter, the inevitable plaid shawl thrown over his shoulders, suit and boots of the worst make, walking alone, perplexed but triumphant; every step—classical soil!—

He knew everything before, only perhaps better than Dame History herself! But if he does feel a bit uncomfortable, and if his confidence shows signs of wavering, then he departs, so as to set it on its legs again in the colder climate of Germany.

Returned from a day's trip, about five men no longer young (all of them must be regular professors in Germany by now) enter noisily one of the more select Roman restaurants; they are in very exalted mood, their hats adorned with wreaths. They exchange views, quarrel about this and that, calling out their orders to the waiter in the meantime. The room resounds with their loud voices. I press myself into a corner, so as not to be seen. "Dovrebbero essere mezzo matti," said an Italian to me in a low voice.

Shouting, drinking, haggling, domineering behaviour in foreign restaurants—the Italian simply considers this as vulgar.

*Anselm Feuerbach*

I do not speak of artistic and literary ladies in impossible toilettes who tuck themselves away in humble eating-houses and third-rate restaurants, and share one portion among three; for us artists there are other dangers.

Inspired by a classical "non so che" there occasionally awakes in the bosom of a prosperous land-owner or manufacturer the desire to do something for art. Once he has unearthed the individual on the strength of recommendations, and when about a month has elapsed in taking up references as to character, morals and domestic circumstances, the new Maecenas of art rouses himself to action. For a few days he creeps stealthily round the house of his victim, so as to view it from outside; finally on the fourth or fifth day he ventures in, and finds there a simple, natural, well educated man. He really gives an order because he knows that he is thereby winning a place in the history of art and binding the artist to him with bonds of eternal gratitude.

An amateur of that ilk showed a sketch from the hand of his little twelve-year old daughter the other day: a farmhouse with two little pigs. "Isn't there music in that, pure music?" he cried, enraptured.

"I very nearly bought a picture to-day," I heard another one say in the hotel, "but I stayed in the catacombs too long."

A very different tone was adopted by a secretary of the Embassy, Mr. So-and-so. He invited me to visit

the Colosseum at 11 o'clock at night by moonlight; in order, as he expressed himself, to "listen to the ghosts of the ancient Romans."

I politely declined, because I foresaw that they would scarcely come.

## LAST ENTRY / 1879.

Who serves his ~~father~~land better, he who has the courage to speak the truth, or he who pastes patriotic lies over the most shocking defects?

Much that was serenely instructive did I offer to my fatherland in my art. It did not accept me, and pursued other arts.

It is not my fault if the flower of my art did not enter life completely and joyously. What kindly Nature implanted in my soul, was retarded and stunted in its growth by my contemporaries' hardness and want of understanding.

This I wanted to say, not for my own sake--what would it avail me now? --but for the sake of truth and for future times. For justice lives in history, not in the life of an individual human being.

*Gottes ist der Orient !  
Gottes ist der Occident !  
Nord-und südliche Gelände  
Ruht im Frieden seines Händes.*

*Er, der einzige Gerechte,  
Will für jedermann das Rechte,  
Sei von seinen hundert Namen,  
Dieser hochgelobet ! Amen.*

GOETHE.

God's is the Orient; God's is the Occident; the northern and the southern lands rest in the peace of His hands.

He, the only Just One, wants the right thing for every man. Of all His hundred names may this one be extolled! Amen.





